



# Child Protection Policy

Redemption Church



[redemptionaz.com](http://redemptionaz.com)

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## Why Should I Bother to Carefully Read 20+ Pages of Policies and Procedures?

Mark and Susanne are a busy family. With three young children at home, Susanne working part-time to help make ends meet, and Mark running a start-up company out of their garage, they don't have a ton of margin in their lives. Add in the kids' homework and after-school activities, and "overwhelmed" wouldn't quite be a sufficient word to describe how they feel.

In what has become a common occurrence in their stressful routine, another late-night argument has left both Mark and Susanne frustrated, strung out, and feeling like they're at the end of their rope. In a last ditch effort to find some sort of answers or help, they decide to give church a shot. After all, what's the worst that could happen? Nothing else has seemed to make a difference to this point.

When Sunday morning rolls around, getting the kids out of bed is a nightmare. Yelling and fighting ensues, but eventually everybody gets out the door and into the car. The ten-minute drive to church (which felt like 3.5 hours of purgatory to Mark and Susanne) was filled with grumbling and complaining from the back seat. Everyone is just done, and another minute together as a family feels like the end of the world. Understandably, they're all quite relieved to see the church ahead on the right.

Not knowing what to expect, Mark is surprised to see someone in the parking lot smiling and waving at them, ushering them into a parking space right by the main entrance. As the family pours out of the car and heads inside, the greetings they receive from the folks at the door are the kindest words any of them have heard all day.

Susanne is simultaneously excited about and dreading putting her kids into the children's ministry. She's excited because they'll be someone else's problem for an hour, but dreading another conversation about behavior and attitude like the one she had to humiliatingly sit through at the parent/teacher conference earlier in the week.

But then, something amazing happens. A smiling volunteer who genuinely seems happy to be there helps them smoothly get through the check-in process. Then one of the children's ministry leaders walks them to the classrooms, introducing them to the teachers in each one of their kids' rooms. The classrooms and volunteers are warm and welcoming, greeting the children by name and expressing how excited they are to spend this time with their kids. Mark and Susanne can't help but skeptically think, "Yeah, wait until you actually see them in action!"

Now seated in the service, Mark and Susanne are just waiting to be called out to deal with some disaster their children have created. Five minutes pass. Then ten, fifteen. Thinking maybe they caught a break this time, they start to relax and actually listen. Surprised by how the preacher practically connects the gospel to their lives in a significant way, they lean in, the worries about their children slowly fading away. As the service comes to a close, Mark and Susanne look at each

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other, and for the first time in longer than either can remember, feel that there may be hope for their life, their marriage, and their family. They're not sure exactly what the answer is yet, but they know that the words they heard this morning rang true, and they want - no, they're desperate for - more.

As they leave the room and head toward the children's area, the prior anxieties set back in. What did their kids do this time? What kind of grimace will be on the volunteers' faces as they pick up the kids? Will they be relieved to hand the three troublemakers back to mom and dad?

Again, their expectations are shattered. As they pick up their youngest preschooler, the volunteer gushes about her creativity and laughter, and tells them how much he hopes to see her again next week. The first grade teacher mentions how their son seemed to connect really well with a couple of the other kids, and made an effort to introduce Mark and Susanne to those other parents. Their fourth grader came bounding out of his class, telling them how much fun he had. His teacher praised him for the deep and thoughtful questions he'd asked about the Bible lesson they'd discussed.

Amazed, the family made their way back to the car. These didn't seem to be the same kids they had to drag out of bed earlier that morning. At lunch, and the whole day that followed, their kids excitedly tell them about everything they did in their classes, about the friends they made, and about their awesome teachers. And before Mark could even bring it up, each of the three kids ask if they can come back next week.

Mark and Susanne couldn't put a finger on it, but something about this church was different. They couldn't explain it entirely, but they felt...loved. And clearly, so did their kids.

Is this a true story? Kind of. It's a conglomerate of stories we've heard and seen over the past several years from many families with a variety of backgrounds and experiences. So why should you take the time to carefully read 20+ pages of policies and procedures? Because these policies and procedures set a framework for an environment where stories like these become possible. What follow in this document are not just rules; they're a system that helps us create a safe environment where kids will feel loved, parents will feel comfortable leaving their children in our care, and we can honor God through the stewardship of this awesome ministry that he's given us.

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## **Our Vision:**

We believe that parents are called to be the primary spiritual leaders of the children and so we strive to support them in a variety of ways. We set out to create a safe, fun, and Bible-centered environment for children while their parents/caregivers focus on the gospel.

## **Our Mission:**

To create a safe and loving environment and to equip parents to be their children's primary spiritual leaders.

## **Staff & Volunteer Expectations:**

All Redemption Kids staff and volunteers share a responsibility for:

- Loving the children as Christ loves them
- Setting an example of proper Christian conduct in all of life
- Ministering to the children
- Understanding that the care of the children is a privilege, and this privilege includes responsibilities to God for ministering to, discipling, and caring for the children

## **Child Protection:**

Our first concern is that children be safe when they are in our care. To ensure this happens we:

- Screen all Redemption Kids volunteers (this process includes criminal background checks and reference checks)
- Perform initial criminal background checks on all full-time church staff and any volunteers who have the potential to be in contact with an unsupervised minor, and reprocess those background checks every three years
- Require training for all children's ministry staff and volunteers
- Use parent authentication identification system
- Employ scheduling procedures and volunteer/child ratios that optimize safety
- Employ a staff member or volunteer to supervise each service, promoting and maintaining safety in the facility
- Equip each room with a first aid kit
- Have a CPR certified adult present at each service
- Educate our staff and volunteers to recognize suspected child abuse, require them to understand and follow any applicable reporting laws, and encourage them to report suspected abuse to church officials
- Adhere to a Well Child Policy for admittance to Redemption Kids
- Adhere to a two-adult volunteer per room policy - NO EXCEPTIONS
- Equip our volunteers to know how to evacuate children safely in the case of an emergency

### **Parameters**

This child protection policy applies to all children who are voluntarily placed by parents under the responsibility of the church for the church's public worship services or specific children's ministry-related church-sponsored activities (parenting and marriage seminars, classes and Bible studies held at the church with accompanying childcare, Vacation Bible School, summer programs and camps, etc.). Any form of abuse, harm, neglect or other problems related to children at home, school, or in any Bible study, activity, or venue not directly related to children's ministry at Redemption Church is not covered by this policy.

## **Personnel Summary**

**Adults** are individuals eighteen years or older.

**Minors** are individuals under eighteen years of age.

**Staff** covers two groups of people: those who are paid employees of the church, and those who lead ministries as a volunteer. All church staff, whether full-time, part-time or volunteer status, are required to receive a background check regardless of whether or not they have direct contact with children.

**Volunteers** are adults who work with children and are not in employment of the church. All volunteers who serve in Redemption Kids are required to go through both the children's ministry training and screening procedures before they serve. The term 'volunteer' will be used throughout this policy manual as an all-encompassing term for anyone who serves with Redemption Kids and is not paid church staff.

**Student volunteers** are students between the ages of 12 to 17 who volunteer in Redemption Kids. Student volunteers go through the same training process as adult volunteers; they are not background checked, but they are vetted by the Redemption Kids staff. Student volunteers will be supervised by the adult volunteers in the same room. Children under age 12 may serve with a background checked and trained parent.

**Pastors and elders** are the officers of the church who serve the church by providing teaching, leadership, and shepherding to the congregation as a whole. They must go through the Redemption Kids volunteer training and screening procedures if they are to serve in Redemption Kids, just like any other volunteer.

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## Protecting The Children Before They Arrive:

Creating a safe and loving environment begins long before the weekend services. Every applicant who wishes to serve in Redemption Kids is required to go through an extensive screening and training process.

### Screening procedure

- All volunteers must have attended any Redemption Congregation for at least three months prior to serving in Redemption Kids.
- All volunteers, including student volunteers, must complete the volunteer application.
- At least two reference checks must be satisfactorily completed prior to volunteering.
- All volunteers will be interviewed by a member of the Redemption Kids staff prior to volunteering.
- All adult volunteers must complete a criminal background check.
- All volunteers, including student volunteers, must complete the Redemption Kids training process.
- All completed records of screening procedures will be kept securely along with the original application.
- All volunteers must repeat the screening procedures and criminal background checks every three years.

Redemption Church reserves the right to reject any applicant for volunteer service or dismiss an existing volunteer for any reason, including, but not limited to; refusing or failing to complete screening; failing to provide requested information; providing information that is subsequently determined as false or misleading; sin or suffering issues that compromise the applicant or volunteer's ability to care for children; any criminal report or charge related to child abuse or endangerment; obtaining information from references or criminal record checks that suggest that the applicant is not suitable to help with children. Any volunteer, member, staff or elder who learns of or has knowledge of misconduct by an applicant must report that knowledge to the pastor or director who oversees Redemption Kids. He or she also must be personally responsible for any legal obligation that he or she may have to disclose such information to the authorities.

### Training

All Redemption Kids staff and volunteers must complete the Redemption Kids volunteer training before they are allowed to work with the children. Additional training sessions will be scheduled for existing volunteers to update them on policies and procedures. Staff who do not have direct contact with children will receive training on child protection policies. Parents with questions or concerns about Redemption Kids are welcome to participate in the training as well.

## **Protecting The Children As They Arrive & Depart:**

### **Arrival and Departure Times**

Volunteers should be ready to accept children prior to the start of any service or event, so that parents/caregivers have enough time to transition their children before the service or event begins. Parents/Caregivers are encouraged to pick up their children soon after the conclusion of the service or event. In the event that a child is not picked up in a timely manner at the conclusion of a service, volunteers will ask to locate the parents/caregivers.

### **Signing a Child in to Redemption Kids**

Any parent/caregiver who would like his/her child to participate in a Redemption Kids program will sign the child in to the appropriate classroom, nursery, or activity when he/she arrives, granting permission for the child to participate in that Redemption Kids event or program. The parent/caregiver should also use this opportunity to note any allergies or special needs the child may have.

Check-in and check-out of children applies to all children checked into Redemption Kids. Pastors, elders, classroom leaders and staff have the right to refuse any child at check-in. Some reasons might include potential illness, behavior that endangers other children, the room being closed because of the volunteer-child ratio, or anything else that might impair our ability to maintain a safe and secure environment for the children. With the exception of special events such as a “Parents Night Out”, a parent or designated caregiver must be in the church building at all times while their children are checked in.

### **Parental Authentication Identification System**

In order to protect the children in our care, each child must be signed into his/her class by a parent or caregiver.

Upon signing a child in, the parent/caregiver will receive printed labels with matching alpha-numeric identification codes. One stays with the parent/caregiver, and the other should be placed on the child. The intent is that the printed label be used to match the parent/caregiver with the child.

When the parent/caregiver comes to pick up the child at the end of the service or event:

- The Redemption Kids volunteer will bring the child to the door, match the numeric code between the child's and parent/caregiver's labels, and remove the child's label before releasing the child to the parent/caregiver.
- Volunteers must check and match the numeric code on every child's and parent/caregiver's labels, every time.
- If a parent/caregiver does not have the matching label, they must reprint their check-in label before the child will be released to them. Only a pastor, elder, or Redemption Kids staff member may authorize the release of a child to a parent/caregiver without the matching label.
- Volunteers will remove and destroy the child's label before the child leaves their room. This will prevent strangers from referring to the child by name in an attempt to lure them away from their parents, and it will help to identify any children who are not where they're supposed to be.
- Only the parent/caregiver with the matching label is authorized to pick up the child. The only exception to this is:
  - In the event of an emergency that would prevent the parent/caregiver from being able to sign out the child at the end of a service or event, the child may be released to the care of a pastor, elder, or staff member of Redemption Church, or to a police officer.
- Children 5th grade and older may be released on their own from the classroom at the conclusion of the service.

### **Divorce, Separation or Custody Visitation**

In a situation where there are custody disputes, the volunteers should only release the child to the parent/caregiver who checked the child in. If someone other than that parent/caregiver attempts to check out the child, the volunteer or staff should immediately contact the Redemption Kids Pastor/Director. If a parent presents a court order for a child, the police must also be present and we are to release the child to police custody. In any of these circumstances, the volunteer or staff should immediately contact the Redemption Kids Pastor/Director.

# Protecting The Children While They Are In Our Care:

## **Two Volunteer Rule**

For all Redemption Kids classes and programs, at least two background checked and trained adult volunteers must be present in each classroom at all times. There are no exceptions to this rule. Student volunteers are always in addition to and supervised by the two adults. Student volunteers are never to be left alone at any time with children without the presence of the two adult volunteers.

A staff member or volunteer may take children out of the classroom only for a compelling reason, such as to use the bathroom or in cases of illness, emergency, or evacuation. Staff or volunteers may not be in a one-on-one setting with any children. If a meeting on the church premises is necessary, it should be done with at least one other adult present, and held with the knowledge and consent of the staff and the parents.

## **Visibility**

When Redemption Kids classes or programs are in session, any doors or windows that provide an outside view into the classroom should remain unobstructed.

## **Photos and Social Media**

No volunteer or staff member is permitted to take pictures of any children, neither are they allowed to post any pictures of children to any social media forum, without the express written consent of the parent/caregiver.

## **Child-to-Volunteer Ratios**

In addition to always having at least two volunteers present, we adhere to state childcare regulations regarding child-to-volunteer ratios, and we have classroom capacities for each room based on the size of the room and the age of the children in that room.

Once a ratio is met, additional children should not be accepted into a classroom unless additional volunteers are added. Additional children should never be accepted into a classroom once the classroom capacity is met. If for any reason the ratio or capacity is exceeded, volunteers should notify a Redemption Kids staff member to find more volunteers for that classroom.

## **Diaper Changing and Bathroom Policies**

### **Infants through two-year-olds**

Only adult females are allowed to change diapers, and all diapers must be changed in the presence of at least one other adult volunteer.

### **Two and three-year-olds**

Children at this age who are still in diapers will follow the same procedures as the younger ages above. In the event that these children are potty training or even completely potty trained and need to use the restroom, an adult female volunteer will escort them to the restroom. The volunteer should wait outside the restroom stall unless the child requires assistance. If assistance is required, the volunteer must wear gloves to prevent any skin-to-skin contact. If necessary a volunteer can help a child redress, but once a child is out of diapers, we will not do any wiping. If a volunteer needs to enter the restroom for any reason while a child is inside, the door to the restroom must be propped open. Only adult females may enter the restroom to provide assistance.

Redemption Kids staff members and volunteers will be available to help as needed, either with taking children to the restroom, or stepping into the classroom to maintain appropriate child-to-volunteer ratios while another volunteer escorts children to the restrooms.

### **Four-year-olds through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade**

For all other classes up through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, any child needing to use the restroom will go with at least one other child of the same gender, and they will be accompanied by an adult volunteer. The volunteer will accompany the children to the restroom and wait outside the closed bathroom door until the children are finished. Volunteers may not enter the restroom to assist these children, with the exception of an accident or emergency. If assistance is required due to accident or emergency, only an adult female volunteer may enter to provide that assistance, and always in view of another volunteer.

In instances where only a single-stall restroom is available, the volunteer escorting children to the restroom will either ask for a second adult volunteer to accompany or remain in clear line of sight of volunteers in a nearby classroom.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> grade and up**

Children 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and older may go to the restroom in same-gender pairs without adult supervision. They must return immediately to their classroom when they are finished. (We have consistent adult supervision at each service.)

## **Appropriate Discipline**

All Redemption Kids volunteers are responsible for providing a loving, respectful, and orderly environment in which children can learn, play, and interact with others. This environment should be maintained by preparing beforehand, proactively directing children towards acceptable activities, verbally encouraging positive behavior, and, when necessary, correcting or redirecting inappropriate behavior.

Acceptable means of redirecting inappropriate behavior may include correcting the child verbally, withholding a certain privilege or activity for a brief time, or separating a child from the situation or problem for a brief time (particularly if the behavior is endangering or upsetting other children). During correction, a child should never be removed from the classroom. Correction should be discrete; in the classroom; and never outside of the sight of other volunteers.

Steps of correction might include (depending on the age of the child): (1) removing the child from the situation or problem; (2) pointing out the problematic behavior; (3) praying for the child and redirecting to a new activity; (4) helping the child to reconcile with the offended children when appropriate. Volunteers should view misbehavior as an opportunity to introduce children to the gospel, and the goal of all correction and discipline should be repentance and reconciliation.

Redemption Kids volunteers and staff members are strictly prohibited from using any form of corporal punishment such as slapping, kicking, punching, spanking, or hitting. They should never speak harsh words, insults, belittling comments, threatening words, or any other verbal humiliation to children.

If a child does not respond to the acceptable means of discipline indicated above, volunteers may ask a Redemption Kids staff member to call the parents/caregivers. If the child assaults, harasses or bullies other children, or the misbehavior requires correction beyond what the volunteer may provide, the parents/caregivers should be immediately called so the child can be removed. Redemption Kids staff and volunteers are allowed to physically restrain a child only if he/she is physically endangering themselves or other children. Please report any of these problems (as well as the appropriate response taken to deal with the behavior) to the Redemption Kids Pastor/Director. Should a child need to be removed from Redemption Kids, reinstatement is possible at the determination of the Redemption Kids Pastor/Director. In any of these situations, the volunteer and all involved parties must fill out and sign an Incident/Accident Report Form.

## **Physical Touch Policy**

Two types of relationships are important to consider: volunteer-to-child and child-to-child.

### **Volunteer-to-child**

While appropriate physical contact with children can be an effective means of aiding in communication, redirecting attention, calming restlessness, or showing godly love and care, it can also be misinterpreted. Particularly in our interaction with children, we want to be blameless and above reproach. The following will help Redemption Kids staff and volunteers to avoid any compromise or concerns in this area:

- Always remain in open sight of other adults.
- Appropriate touch is positive physical contact that nurtures children and develops a sense of emotional security and maturity in their interactions with adults. Appropriate touch is applied to meet the needs of children and not the adults.
- Appropriate physical contact will vary according to the age of the child. What is appropriate for nursery children (holding, rocking, sitting on laps, etc.) will not be appropriate for grade school children.
- Inappropriate touch involves, but is not limited to coercion or other forms of physical contact which exploits the child's lack of knowledge, satisfies adult physical needs at the expense of the child, violates laws against sexual or physical contact between adult and child, and any attempt to modify child behavior with physical force.
- For ages 2 thru 5, only an adult volunteer can take children to the restroom, and only an adult female may enter the restroom to provide any needed assistance.
- Sitting on laps is only appropriate for ages 0 to 3. While there may be specific instances (separation anxiety when being dropped off, getting hurt, etc.) where an older child needs the comfort of an embrace or sitting on a lap, it should only be for a brief period of time. Beyond that, we hold to a "feet on the floor" policy.

- In general, a male volunteer will need to limit physical contact more than a female volunteer in the same situation, especially when working with older children.
- Volunteers should refrain from rough-housing, wrestling, shoulder or piggy-back rides, rubbing, massaging, or any physical activity that might make a child feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- Only touch children in “safe” areas and for a brief time. “Safe” areas generally include hands, arms, shoulders, upper back, or gentle pats on the top of the head. Never touch a child on or near any region that is private or personal, unless when necessary while assisting in a diaper change or restroom visit.
- Never touch a child out of frustration or anger. Physical discipline is not an appropriate means of correcting someone else’s child.

### **Child-to-child**

- No children will ever be unsupervised after being checked into Redemption Kids.
- No inappropriate touching (as defined above) of any kind will be accepted.
- Fighting will not be tolerated, and any child participating in violent action will be dismissed from Redemption Kids and placed into his or her parent/caregiver’s care.

## **Parents in the Classroom**

The only people who are allowed into our Redemption Kids classrooms are background checked and trained volunteers. Because of that, we do not allow parents/caregivers to accompany their children into the classroom for any reason. If a parent/caregiver is concerned about their child, they are welcome to come back and check on the child at any time.

Volunteers should assure concerned parents/caregivers that all Redemption Kids volunteers are background checked and trained, and that we have policies and procedures in place to ensure the safety and welfare of the children.

## **Food and Drink Policy**

Every Redemption Congregation does snacks and food differently, but we do work to ensure a peanut-free environment in each of our classrooms. Each specific congregation will make its food and drink policy available to parents.

## **Caring for Children with Allergies**

Parents/caregivers of children with allergies should indicate those allergies on their child's name tag. We ask that parents/caregivers notify the volunteers in their child's classroom about the allergy as well, along with information on how to handle an allergic reaction and any other special instructions.

## **Security and Emergency Response**

### **Emergency Situations**

In emergency situations, if appropriate, 911 will be called to secure help and/or the display monitors will be used to summon staff and volunteers to the classroom to assist with the emergency.

### **Accidents, First Aid and Medical Emergencies**

All classrooms are equipped with basic first aid kits. In the event of life-threatening injury or illness, emergency medical services will be called and parents/caregivers should be located and informed immediately. Volunteers must complete an Incident/Accident Report Form for all injuries, whether major or minor, prior to leaving the premises on the day of the accident.

### **Evacuation Procedures**

Each Redemption Congregation will have its own campus-specific evacuation procedures, which will include the following:

- Nursery (infants and crawlers) rooms equipped with rolling cribs
- Predetermined evacuation locations
- Evacuation instructions and maps clearly displayed

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## Well Child Policy:

In order to prevent the spread of communicable diseases among the children, several guidelines are in place concerning disease.

- Volunteers will use disposable gloves and proper hygiene procedures to change diapers, wipe noses, and handle blood spills.
- Hand washing and use of anti-bacterial hand sanitizer must be a regular habit for both children and volunteers.
- Toys and equipment are washed and disinfected regularly.
- Redemption Kids is a “Well Child” ministry. As much as we love to care for children each and every week, we simply are not properly equipped to care for sick children. We also don’t want to do anything that would potentially endanger the health of the other kids and volunteers in our classrooms. With that in mind, we ask that parents/caregivers refrain from checking a child into Redemption Kids if any of the following conditions are present:
  - Fever – child must be 24 hours fever-free
  - Runny Nose – except due to allergy
  - Persistent Cough
  - Vomiting or Diarrhea - must be 24 hours symptom-free
  - Any contagious or questionable skin rash
  - Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)
  - Lice
  - Any symptoms of common childhood diseases, such as chickenpox, strep throat, foot and mouth, etc.

If a child is experiencing any non-contagious symptoms, we ask that parents/caregivers communicate that with the volunteers in the child’s classroom so as to prevent any unnecessary confusion or concern.

Children who appear ill during a class will be removed from the classroom and kept at the check-in kiosks while a Redemption Kids staff member locates the parents/caregivers.

We ask that parents/caregivers inform the Redemption Kids Pastor/Director if their child appears to have contracted an illness during a Redemption Kids event, so that other parents may be notified if necessary. If a child contracts an illness and has been in contact with other children while at Redemption Church, it is the responsibility of parents/caregivers to notify the Redemption Kids Pastor/Director.

Redemption Kids volunteers are asked to request a substitute if they are experiencing any of the symptoms on the list above.

## Child Abuse & Neglect:

### What is child abuse or neglect?

Child abuse or neglect occurs when a parent and/or caregiver inflicts or allows the infliction of physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect, exploitation or abandonment.

### The Different Types of Child Abuse:

**Neglect:** Neglect occurs when children are not given necessary care for illness or injury. Neglect also includes leaving young children unsupervised or alone, locked in or out of the house, or without adequate clothing, food, or shelter. Allowing children to live in a very dirty house which could be a health hazard may also be considered neglect.

**Physical:** Physical abuse includes non-accidental physical injuries such as bruises, broken bones, burns, cuts or other injuries.

**Sexual:** Sexual abuse occurs when sex acts are performed with children. Using children in pornography, prostitution or other types of sexual activity is also sexual abuse.

It is important to note that sexual abuse can be perpetrated by an adult or another child. 23% of reported cases of child sexual abuse are perpetrated by individuals under the age of 18.\*

**Emotional:** Emotional abuse of a child is evidenced by severe anxiety, depression, withdrawal or improper aggressive behavior as diagnosed by a medical doctor or psychologist, and caused by the acts or omissions of the parent or caretaker.

**Exploitation:** Exploitation means use of a child by a parent, guardian or custodian for material gain.

**Abandonment:** Abandonment means the failure of the parent to provide reasonable support and to maintain regular contact with the child, including providing normal supervision, when such failure is intentional and continues for an indefinite period.

\*U.S. Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Website

## Appendix 1: Identifying and Reporting Child Abuse at Redemption Church

### What to Know and Look For

- All volunteers are required by law to report suspected abuse of minors if reasonable belief is developed during the course of their duties in serving as Redemption Kids volunteers
- Reasonable belief is defined as “any facts from which one could reasonably conclude that a child has been abused”
- If person suspected of abuse is in care, custody, or control of the child, report to law enforcement and/or DCS
- If person suspected of abuse is not in care, custody, or control, report only to law enforcement
- If a person is found guilty of not reporting suspected abuse, and abuse has occurred, that person can be convicted of either a class 6 felony (for a sexual offense) or a class 1 misdemeanor (for any other offense)

Indicators of potential physical child abuse or neglect include:

- skin bruising
- pressure sores
- malnutrition and dehydration
- burns
- bone fractures and breaks
- recurring injuries

Child sexual abuse may include:

- indecent exposure
- sexual abuse and child molestation
- sexual conduct with a minor
- incest
- child pornography
- child prostitution
- surreptitious filming or photographing of a minor

Sexual child abuse does not typically have the physical markers like physical abuse and neglect. Indicators of sexual abuse are more likely to be displayed in the following ways:

- intense fear of and withdrawing from adult volunteers
- aggressive pursuit of physical affection from adults
- preferring to play in isolation
- experiencing pain or itching in genital areas
- attempting sexual contact with toys or other children
- drawings of sexual activities

If a volunteer has reasonable belief to suspect child abuse, do not:

- investigate – unless in the case of physical abuse, a volunteer may only ask who, what, when, and where, recording the exact responses
- notify the accused
- put victim and alleged offender together
- release any details or confer with other volunteers

If a volunteer has reasonable belief to suspect child abuse, do:

- immediately bring reasonable belief only to the attention of the Redemption Kids Pastor/Director – we will then notify the proper authorities together
- maintain confidentiality
- cooperate with any official investigation

## Appendix 2: Child Abuse Training Sheet

### What is child abuse?

Child abuse is when a parent or caregiver, acts, or fails to act, and thus causes injury, death, emotional harm or risk of serious harm, to a child. There are many forms of child maltreatment, including sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse and exploitation.

### Warning Signs of Child Abuse:

None of these signs alone proves that child abuse is occurring. But when these signs present themselves together and/or repeatedly in a child, then there is the possibility of child abuse and a closer look should be taken.

### Warning Signs of Sexual Abuse:

- Over-sexualized behaviors
- Difficulty walking/sitting

- Runs away from home
- Sleep problems/nightmares
- Overly secretive
- Has unexplained gifts/money
- Self-harming
- Frequently absent from school
- Cowers at the approach of adults

### Warning Signs of Physical Abuse:

- Cowers at the approach of adults
- Unexplained injuries, bruises/marks, and/or burns
- Runs away from home
- Overly withdrawn
- Inappropriately dressed for the weather
- Overly aggressive
- Lack of desire to go home
- Sleep problems/nightmares

### Warning Signs of Neglect:

- Consistently dirty
- Steals food or money
- Lacks needed medical care
- Consistently tired

- Frequently absent from school
- Lack of parental involvement
- Abuses drugs/alcohol
- Inappropriately dressed for the weather

### Warning Signs of Emotional Abuse:

- Overly compliant
- Extreme inhibition in play
- Dressed differently than other children in the family

### Warning Signs of Exploitation:

- Suddenly appears disconnected from family, friends, school, house of worship
- Shows signs of being denied food, water, medical care
- Child lacks personal possessions and appears to not have a stable living situation

**What to ask the child if abuse is suspected:**

If the following hasn't already been disclosed, ask ONLY the following 4 questions:

1. WHAT happened?
2. WHO did this to you?
3. WHERE were you when this happened?
4. WHEN did this happen?

**What to do if abuse is suspected:**

Report it to the Redemption Kids Pastor/Director immediately! Together we will involve law enforcement and pastoral staff. While the Redemption Kids Pastor/Director will assist you in this process, you should not delegate the responsibility of making the report to someone else. Telling your supervisor does not absolve you of the responsibility of making a report. Maintain confidentiality with the Redemption Kids Pastor/Director and the pastoral staff.

You should not share any of these details with other volunteers, or any one else in the congregation.

**Where to report the suspected abuse:**

If the suspected abuser is a family member or caregiver then the call can be made to the DCS

(formerly known as CPS) Statewide Toll-Free Child Abuse Hotline at 1-888-767-2445, (1-888-SOS-CHILD) or law enforcement. If the suspected abuser is NOT a family member or caregiver, then only law enforcement should be called.

**It is important NOT to tell the suspected offender that you made the report! If necessary, the Redemption Kids Pastor/Director will assist you in ensuring that the child is not released to the suspected offender.**

**Who should report suspected abuse:**

Any person who has a reasonable belief that a minor has been the victim of child abuse or neglect should report to the appropriate authorities.

**Reasonable belief of abuse does not require certainty!**

**Remember, "you are a reporter...NOT an investigator".**

**What is reasonable belief:**

You form a "Reasonable belief" when:

- A child discloses to you information indicating sexual or physical abuse or neglect.
- A child has unexplained injuries or an explanation that is inconsistent with the injuries.
- A third party discloses information that gives you reason to believe abuse or neglect has occurred.

**Who is considered a mandatory reporter in**

**Arizona:**

There are many required by law to report. For our purposes, the following must report: any peace officer, member of the clergy, priest or Christian Science practitioner, and any other person who has responsibility for the care or treatment of the minor.

**Can I be punished for not reporting abuse?:**

A mandatory reporter who does not report a sexual offense can be charged with a Class 6 Felony.

A mandatory reporter who does not report another type of abuse can be charged with a Class 1 Misdemeanor.

**What does a child abuser/child predator look like:**

Child predators look just like every other person on the street, and that's their intent. Child predators want to blend in with the society in hopes that their behaviors go unnoticed. People who sexually abuse children often go out of their way to appear trustworthy and likeable. 86% of the time the sexual abuser is someone known to the child.

**How can I best minister to a child who has been abused?**

Healing after child abuse is imperative and the church can play a vital role in that healing if handled appropriately.

- Pray for the children that you are working with
- Offer faith based recovery therapy programs

- Cooperate with the investigation
- Follow the protocol of reporting abuse so that when/if the case goes to court, the perpetrator can be effectively prosecuted, which can prevent the predator from harming another child
- Assign a pastor to shepherd the victim and the victim's family
- Assign a staff member to shepherd the accused, if the accused is a part of the church
- Maintain confidentiality

For more detailed information on child abuse, and child abuse reporting laws in Arizona, visit [dcs.az.org](http://dcs.az.org)

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## **Appendix 3: Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting Guidelines-Arizona**

### **Online Reporting Service for Mandatory Reporters**

Mandatory reporters are required by law, as defined by ARS 13-3620, to report all concerns of child abuse or neglect. Department of Child Safety (DCS) provides this secure website for mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect to report non-emergency concerns, as authorized by ARS 13-3620. Non-emergency concerns are those in which a child is not at immediate risk of abuse or neglect that could result in serious harm.

#### **How do I access Arizona's Online Reporting Service for Mandatory Reporters?**

This website is only for mandated reporters to report situations that do not require an emergency response. An emergency is a situation where a child faces an immediate risk of abuse or neglect that could result in death or serious harm. If a child is in immediate danger, call 911 immediately!

Each mandatory reporter creates an account.

<https://extranet.azdes.gov/DCYF/CHILDS/communication/des/Register.aspx?ReturnUrl=>

Each time the mandatory reporter logs in, the Reporting Party section will auto-populate with the mandatory reporter's information.

- The mandatory reporter can update account information.
- Register (link is external) for an account.
- Login (link is external) to existing account.
- You may wish to Bookmark or Favorite the Log In page to your browser.
- If you forget your user name and password, the system allows you to reset your information.

## **Who Must Report?**

Any person who reasonably believes that a minor is or has been the victim of physical injury, abuse, child abuse, a reportable offense or neglect that appears to have been inflicted on the minor by other than accidental means or that is not explained by the available medical history as being accidental in nature, or who reasonably believes that there has been a denial or deprivation of necessary medical treatment or surgical care or nourishment with the intent to cause or allow the death of an infant who is protected under A.R.S. § 36-2281, shall immediately report or cause reports to be made of this information to a peace officer or to the Department of Child Safety, except if the report concerns a person who does not have care, custody or control of the minor, the report shall be made to a peace officer only.

The following persons are required by law to report:

- Any physician, physician's assistant, optometrist, dentist, osteopath, chiropractor, podiatrist, behavioral health professional, nurse, psychologist, counselor or social worker who develops the reasonable belief in the course of treating a patient.
- Any peace officer, member of the clergy, priest or Christian Science practitioner.
- The parent, stepparent or guardian of the minor.
- School personnel or domestic violence victim advocates who develop the reasonable belief in the course of their employment.
- Any other person who has responsibility for the care or treatment of the minor.
- A person making a report or providing information about a child is immune from civil or criminal liability unless such person has been charged with, or is suspected of, the abuse or neglect in question.
- A person acting with malice who either knowingly and or intentionally makes a false report of child abuse and neglect or who coerces another person to make a false report is guilty of a crime. A person who knowingly and intentionally falsely accuses another of maliciously making a false report of child abuse and neglect is also guilty of a crime.

### **When to report?**

A report should be made when any person, who reasonably believes that a child under 18 has been abused, neglected, exploited or abandoned. A report of suspected abuse, neglect, exploitation or abandonment is only a request for an investigation. The person making the report does not need to prove the abuse. Investigation and validation of child abuse reports are the responsibilities of DCS workers. If additional incidents of abuse occur after the initial report has been made, make another report.

### **What to report?**

A report can be made to the DCS Statewide Toll-Free Child Abuse Hotline at **1-888-767-2445, (1-888-SOS-CHILD)** or to **law enforcement (see Law Enforcement by Congregation document)**. When reporting, the following information, if known, will be requested:

- name, age, and gender of child and other family members
- address, phone numbers, and/or directions to child's home
- parents' place of employment
- description of suspected abuse or neglect
- current condition of the child

## Appendix 4: Mandatory Report Form

Instructions: If a volunteer, staff, pastor, or elder suspect, hear about, or observe signs or symptoms of abuse, please 1.) Talk immediately with the Redemption Kids Director or the Redemption Kids Pastor and 2.) Document any relevant information on this form. 3.) Report together to DCS or Law Enforcement.

This report should include signs or symptoms observed, notations about bruises or injuries that are visible, a summary of what the child said, and a description of any emotions expressed by the child. **DO NOT GO BACK AND INTERVIEW THE CHILD.** Ask open ended questions. Fill this form out based on whatever information has already been attained.

**Remember you are not interviewing the child...doing so could impede any future chance of prosecuting reported perpetrators.**

**1-888-767-2445, (1-888-SOS-CHILD)**

**See Law Enforcement by Congregation document and call appropriate LE**

**Today's Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Child:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Parent/Guardian:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Volunteer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signs or symptoms of abuse observed:**

**Bruises or injuries that are visible:**

**Emotions expressed by the child:**

**Summary of the conversation with the child:**

**Anything else that is relevant:**

**Check all that apply:**

Redemption Kids Pastor  
Notified

Redemption Lead Pastor  
Notified

Redemption Students  
Pastor Notified

Pastor of Care & Biblical  
Counseling, Elder Notified



## **Appendix 5: Incident/Accident Report Form**

This form is to be used for NON child abuse reporting. Please retain a copy for the church's records. If reporting suspected child abuse use the Mandatory Report Form.

**Today's Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Teacher's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Service Time:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Room Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Incident/Accident:**

Circle the correct word (incident or accident) and then give a description of what happened. For example: the child that bites another child/adult would get an "incident" form and the child who was bitten would get an "accident" form.

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**Action Taken:**

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**Teacher's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Leader's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 6: Law Enforcement by Congregation

### **Alhambra**

Phoenix Police Department - Mountain View Precinct  
602-495-5007

### **Arcadia**

Phoenix Police Department - Mountain View Precinct  
602-495-5007

### **Flagstaff**

Flagstaff Police Department  
928-774-1414

### **Gateway**

Mesa Police Department  
480-644-2211

### **Gilbert**

Gilbert Police Department  
480-503-6500

### **Peoria**

Peoria Police Department  
623-773-7096

### **Scottsdale**

Scottsdale Police Department  
480-312-5000

### **Tempe**

Tempe Police Department  
480-350-8311

### **Tucson**

Tucson Police Department  
520-791-6813

### **West Mesa**

Mesa Police Department  
480-644-2211

## Appendix 7: Helpful Resources

### Websites

Winged Hope Family Advocacy Foundation  
Arizona Department of Child Safety  
Childhelp  
Sex Offender Database

[wingedhope.org](http://wingedhope.org)  
[dcs.az.gov/](http://dcs.az.gov/)  
[childhelp.org](http://childhelp.org)  
[azdps.gov/services/sex\\_offender/](http://azdps.gov/services/sex_offender/)

### Books

#### Child Abuse

**On Guard: Preventing and Responding to Child Abuse at Church** by, Deepak Reju

#### Domestic Violence

**Surviving Domestic Violence** by, Elaine Weiss

#### Foster Care

**Wounded Children Healing Homes** by, Jane Schooler, Betsy Keefer Smalley and Timothy Callahan

#### For Children

**I Said No!** by, Kimberly King