

Child Protection Training Video Notes

Each week, many children are welcomed through the doors of our church to attend worship, classes, clubs, camps and more. While they are here, we hope each one will experience the love of God and learn to trust Him. We want them to know that He cares about each detail of their lives. For that to happen, they must be safe and feel safe, knowing they can trust the people caring for them: those that model God's love for them.

Unfortunately, in some churches, children have suffered abuse, even from those who claimed to be leading them in the ways of God. And years later, many still have an emotional scar from that memory. Churches can be vulnerable places for child abuse to happen. Part of this is due to the common feeling among parents, that churches are one big happy family, and they let their children roam freely. Many don't realize that a majority of child abusers are people their children know and trust! Other times, abuse has happened because churches have not screened their workers or set up safety protocols for their teams to follow.

We never want that kind of tragedy to happen in our church! So, we have created this video to help you, the Children's Ministry team member, **learn how to protect our children from abuse** and **protect yourself from any false accusation**. In addition, since we want the children to be safe from any physical injuries, this training will also include **how to prevent and handle medical emergencies**.

Definition and Signs of Abuse

There are four basic types of abuse:

- defined by *The National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse*:
 - **Physical Abuse** – Non-accidental injury, which may include beatings, violent shaking, human bites, strangulation, suffocation, poisoning or burns. The results may be bruises and welts, broken bones, scars, permanent disfigurement, long lasting psychological damage, serious internal injuries, brain damage or death.
 - **Neglect** – The failure to provide a child with basic needs including food, clothing, education, shelter and medical care; also abandonment and inadequate supervision.
 - **Sexual Abuse** – The sexual exploitation of a child by an older person as in rape, incest, fondling of the genitals, exhibitionism or pornography.
 - **Emotional Maltreatment** – A pattern of behavior that attacks a child's emotional development and a sense of self-worth, such as constant criticizing, belittling, insulting, manipulation; also, providing no love.

You should be knowledgeable of all potential signs of neglect or abuse such as strange marks on a child's body, a sudden change in behavior, sudden interest in inappropriate sexual comments, overly anxious, wearing inappropriate clothes for the weather, or always complaining of pain or hunger.

Prevention Measures

To prevent this type of abuse from happening, as a church we take the following measures:

1. First of all, we pray for the safety of our children. Pray for the children in your care, and know that prayer is very powerful!
2. Everyone who works with children or students is required to complete the KidSafe process including an application, reference checks, background check, and interview with a ministry leader. Thank you for being willing to complete those steps with us!
3. As the one closely working with children, you should be aware of the people in your room, or in the hallways, and never be alone, one-on-one, with a child or student in a room. If the need arises, you can always ask a parent to stay with you until your volunteer partner arrives or go with the child to another room to wait with other volunteers for a parent to pick up. It is important to set yourself and the children up to be safe.
4. Stay outside while children go into the bathroom, or leave the bathroom door open if you go in to assist a young child. Prop the outside doors open if children are in the bathroom together inside stalls. This way you can see if there are any other people in the restroom when the children go in.
5. Please use the safe check-in and check-out procedure as they are designed. Parents need to show you their pick-up sticker and sign the children out at the end of every class.
6. When there is an off-site event or camp, it is important to use these same guidelines and do not transport children alone. To transport children for such events, you must pass a special driving background check and have official church permission slips from parents, allowing you to transport their children to a specific place.

What to Do if You Suspect Abuse

So, what do you do if you suspect abuse in the child's life or see inappropriate behavior on the part of an adult or another child?

- As a representative for the child, your job is to keep the child safe.
- Do not interview the child or try to diagnose the situation.
- Do not discuss the situation with other teachers or volunteers.
- Do not discuss the situation with the parents of the child.
- You must bring your concerns or details of the situation within six hours to Ministry Staff Leaders. They are mandated reporters and will determine the next steps for the child's safety.

Medical Emergencies

There are two types of medical emergencies: medical and trauma. When we're talking about a strictly **medical emergency**, we're talking about illness, allergic reactions, fever...something affecting a person's health from within. When we're talking about a **trauma emergency**, this is something that has affected a person's health from without, like a fall, getting hit, or breaking a bone.

These illnesses or injuries can, of course, be as mild as a stuffy nose or paper cut, or as severe as an asthma attack or head injury that can lead to death. As scary as that sounds, not every illness or injury requires a call to 911, and in any of these cases, please remember, don't panic. When you're facing a situation where you have to determine what you're dealing with, there are three levels to consider. You're going to want to rule them out starting with the most severe:

Level 3: Serious

This is an illness or injury that is immediately life-threatening. Consider the ABC's in this case. Does this situation threaten a person's **A**irway, **B**reathing or **C**irculation? A threat to a person's airway means that something is stopping air from getting into their lungs. This could include obstruction, like an object that is causing this person to choke, or an allergic reaction that is closing their airway. A threat to their breathing means that something is interrupting or stopping the exchange of oxygen in their blood in their lungs. They're just not getting enough air. This could be something like an asthma attack. A threat to their circulation means that not enough blood is flowing through their body, as in the case of internal bleeding or an external wound where they're losing a lot of blood. If A, B, or C are threatened, call 911 immediately. That said, the ABC's aren't the only concern when it comes to Level 3 emergencies. In the case of a trauma emergency, if the injury is severe enough, call 911.

Severe injuries may not affect the ABC's but still warrant a call to 911. If a child falls 10 feet or more, if the injury results in their mental status being altered (unconscious, not making sense, etc.), if there is an object of bone penetrating their body, or if you need to use an EpiPen, call 911.

- All people on the Children's Ministry Team should be trained how to use an EpiPen.
- To be trained in using an EpiPen and determine if you need to administer it to a child, you must watch the following video and attend a training by a licensed physician. We will hold these trainings on occasion. Please watch the following training video at <https://www.epipen.com/en/about-epipen/how-to-use-epipen>.
- In order for a teacher to administer the EpiPen, a parent must complete the Health Form and turn it into the Children's Ministry office. Then each time the child comes to class, the parent must give the teacher the EpiPen with the tear-off part of the form in a plastic bag.

Level 2: Moderate

Wow...now that we've got that scary stuff out of the way, let's get to the part where death isn't in the picture. A Level 2 situation is a non-life-threatening illness or injury, but one that would probably require a doctor's visit. This could be a broken bone, a concussion, or the flu.

Level 1: Minor

Now for the stuff we deal with daily... A Level 1 illness or injury is superficial. This might be a cough, cold, paper cut, or bruise. 911 would be overkill, here, but as with any of these levels, you'll always want to tell the parent and/or a person on staff.

How do we prevent medical emergencies? Here are some preventative measures you can take as a Children's Ministry team member.

First, know the allergies of the children in your room. Allergies are listed on the children's nametags as well as on our attendance lists.

Second, be aware of your environment. Check your area to make sure it is safe for both you and the children. Also, do not give any medications to children. The only exception is administering a prescribed EpiPen to a child.

Third, be aware of what can cause concussions and the symptoms associated with them. Always sit a child out of an activity if they have hit their head. Every time a child hits their head, inform the parent and give them the Concussion Symptom Handout.

If an injury occurs in the classroom, what is your responsibility? First, always tell the parent! For a minor injury, such as a scratch, tell the parent about it at pick-up. For a more serious injury, call the parent immediately and make sure to fill out an incident report form. If you are unfamiliar with this form or don't know where to find one, please see a Children's Ministry staff member. The forms need to be turned in the day of the incident.

Finally, always carry your cell phone. It's just best practice to be able to reach Ministry Staff or 911 at any time.

Remember why we are doing this – to protect our children and protect you!

- Don't forget to pray for safety!
- Use common sense.
- Remember, don't overthink in a crisis.
- Don't panic!

And remember, God cares for these children far more than we do. He will honor our diligence in doing our part to prevent harm to the kids, and ultimately, their safety is in His hands.

Thanks for watching this video. Now, please go to the link to take a quiz on the material covered in this video. Follow the directions on the quiz in order to submit it to our Children's Ministry department.