



STOCKPORT BAPTIST CHURCH

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

**A set of agreed policies and procedures for ensuring a safe environment for children and young people within the care of our church.
All guidelines comply with the Safe To Grow document-Revised Fourth Edition 2004.**

September 2005

FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT THE “YOUNG PERSON” REFERS TO ANYONE UNDER THE AGE OF 18 YEARS.

Stockport Baptist Church and young people.

In working with young people we seek to:

- ❖ **Offer and provide a caring and fun environment accessible to all young people recognising that they have rights and needs that should be honoured and respected by all.**
- ❖ **Recognise each young person as a valued member of the community.**
- ❖ **Offer support and caring relationships.**
- ❖ **Help to develop personal qualities, attitudes and values that prepare them to be contributors and participants within the community of Stockport Baptist Church and the wider society.**
- ❖ **Involve young people with special needs-their parents/guardians will be encouraged to give relevant information to assist the leaders and enable the young person to fully participate in all activities.**

We positively encourage young people to:

- ❖ **Develop a real faith and love for Jesus**
- ❖ **Have respect for themselves, for others and for a shared environment.**
- ❖ **Understand the need for self-discipline based on an underlying concern for others.**

Responsible person- to be arranged

The Responsible Person is appointed by the church and is a central contact point for any child protection concerns raised within the church. The Responsible Person is the person that workers would turn to if they had any concerns about a young person in their care or about the behaviour of one of their fellow workers. Any referrals to Social Services would normally be through this person.

Independent people

The Independent People are appointed by the church to be an alternative point of contact available to the young people should they wish to speak about concerns to a person who is independent of their group setting.

They would act as an alternative contact person for young people and their families for concerns, comments, suggestions and complaints regarding any aspect of the church's work with young people.

They would support and monitor the implementation of the church's child protection policy.

The Independent People for Stockport Baptist are:

Mrs Jean Tuffin tel: 0161 285-0231

Mr Geoff Vann tel: 0161 483-5369

Minister's role

If at all possible, the minister should be independent of all these roles. If a difficult situation arises, the minister will be responsible for offering pastoral care to the people who are involved and to the church as a whole. It may be difficult for the minister to do this effectively if they are too closely involved in the structures.

Minister: Rev Richard Booth tel: Church: 0161 476-2429
Home: 0161 419 -9014

Young Peoples' Coordinators:

Friday Kids' Club: Miss Becky Allen tel: 0161 440-9830

Energise: Mrs Helen Riley tel: 0161 480-8562

Stockport Baptist Church Policy Statement on Young People and the Church.

- ❖ **As members of this church, we commit ourselves to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all, especially children and young people.**
- ❖ **It is the responsibility of each one of us to report any abuse discovered or suspected and, in as far as we are able, to prevent the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children and young people.**
- ❖ **We recognise that our work with children and young people is the responsibility of the whole church.**
- ❖ **We undertake to exercise proper care in the selection and appointment of those working with children and young people whether paid or volunteer.**
- ❖ **The church is committed to supporting, resourcing and training those who work with children and young people and to providing supervision.**
- ❖ **The church is committed to the Home Office Code Of Practice *Safe From Harm* and adopts the guidelines and procedures published by the Baptist Union of Great Britain in it's booklet *Safe to Grow*.**
- ❖ **Each worker with children and young people must know the recommendations and undertake to observe them. Each shall be given a copy of the church's agreed procedures and good practice guidelines.**

Guidelines for the appointment of Young Peoples' Leaders and Helpers

- 1) Church should ensure that correct selection procedures have been followed:
 - a) an application form has been completed
 - b) two references have been obtained
 - c) CRB checks have been completed and a satisfactory Enhanced disclosure obtained.**

- 2) Leaders will be church members.**

- 3) Helpers will normally, but not always be church members.**

- 4) All leaders and helpers must have a calling to work with children and young people, and this should be recognised by the church leadership and have the agreement of existing youth leaders.**

- 5) New leaders and helpers shall have a probationary period of three months.**

- 6) All leaders and helpers have the opportunity to review their role with members of the church leadership on annual basis.**

- 7) The first priority of leaders and helpers, at those times when their group meets, must be to fulfill the role to which they have committed themselves.**

- 8) If for any reasons leaders or helpers cannot attend, they should normally give at least 48 hours notice.**

- 9) The first priority of leaders and helpers should be their own spiritual welfare and they should attend church services regularly.**

- 10) All leaders and helpers should set a good example for Christ in their personal lifestyle.**

- 11) For "One-off" events, eg Holiday Club, helpers will be required to complete a self-disclosure form and to comply with all current child-protection guidelines in the church policy. Such helpers must not work alone with young people.**

Good Practice Guidelines When Working With Young People

You the worker should:

- ❖ **Avoid being alone with a young person where their activity cannot be seen. On church premises this may mean leaving doors open, or two groups working in the same room.**
- ❖ **In a pastoral/one to one situation with a young person, make sure that where possible the worker is the same sex as the young person and that, even where privacy and confidentiality are necessary, another adult is aware of the situation and doors are left open.**
- ❖ **Treat all the young people and children with respect and dignity. Use age appropriate language and tone of voice. Be aware of your own body language and invading a person's personal space.**
- ❖ **Not engage in any of the following:**
 - **Invading the space of young people when they are changing, showering or using the toilet.**
 - **Rough, physical or sexually provocative games.**
 - **Making sexually suggestive comments about or to a young person even in "fun"**
 - **Inappropriate and intrusive touching of any form.**
 - **Any scapegoating, ridiculing or rejecting of a young person.**
- ❖ **Make sure another adult is present if, for example a young child has soiled their underclothes and needs attention.**
- ❖ **Not let youngsters involve you in excessive attention-seeking that is overtly sexual or physical in nature.**
- ❖ **Only invite young people to your home, or on trips, in groups and always make sure another adult is present. Parental permission should always be sought for such an event.**
- ❖ **Not give lifts to young people on their own, without parental consent. If a young person is alone, ask them to sit in the rear of the car. Always ensure seat belts are worn. Ensure that if transporting young people you have the correct insurance cover for the passengers. Where possible ensure you have parental permission.**

Good Practice Guidelines When Working With Young People

Cont...

- ❖ **Not share sleeping accommodation with young people if you take a group away.**
- ❖ **Be aware of any physical contact you have with young people. Ensure it is appropriate and that you are never alone with a child.**
- ❖ **Not use physical punishment when controlling or discipline young people.**
- ❖ **Keep a register at each meeting documenting the names of the young people and adults present. Keep a record of any significant events using the church Incident Reporting Documentation.**

Good Practice Guidelines for Discipline

- ❖ **Young people should be disciplined without the use of physical punishment, shouting or name calling.**
- ❖ **Discipline is about our relationship with young people NOT our mastery of them.**
- ❖ **Good discipline is built on respect between leaders and young people. (This does not imply equality but does have an implication for leaders' attitudes towards young people)**

It is therefore necessary to have standards, and means of maintaining them, which ensure all youth work is undertaken in a disciplined and orderly environment. These are general guidelines for discipline:

- 1) **Deal personally with minor incidents on the spot. This prevents escalation and enables major incidents to be seen as major and be dealt with accordingly e.g.:**
 - **Confront the group/individual-criticise the behaviour not the person.**
 - **Move the person/s involved to a calm environment and stay with them until they have calmed down but keep the time out short. Change the group/activity.**

- 2) **Referral system-to be used when the above procedures fail to bring about the desired result:**
 - **Always discuss the problem with another leader or with the minister.**
 - **If the parents/guardians need to be informed discuss this with another leader or the minister. This should only be done with regard to serious incidents/problems, once all other avenues have been exhausted.**
 - **Exclusions- this step is a last resort after all measures have failed. Exclusion can either be temporary or permanent.**

NO EXCLUSION SHOULD OCCUR WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH THE MINISTER AND OTHER GROUP LEADERS.

Good Practice Guidelines with Colleagues

If you see another leader behaving in a way which may be misconstrued be prepared to either speak to them, other members of the team, the minister or the responsible person.

Leaders should encourage an atmosphere of mutual support and care which allows all workers to be comfortable enough to discuss inappropriate behaviour.

RATIO'S

When working with young people the following ratios apply:

Age 0-2 years 1:3

Age 2-3 years 1:4

Age 3-8 years 1:8

Age 8 and over 2:20(male and female) plus 1 extra adult for every 10 children.

Outdoor activities

Age 0-2 years 1:3

Age 2-3 years 1:4

Age 3-8 years 2:15(male and female) plus 1 extra adult for every 8 children.

Age 13+ 2:20(male and female) plus 1 extra adult for every 10 young people.

Good Practice Guidelines Regarding Health & Safety:

- ❖ Where practicable, for trips and other special events, a Risk Assessment should be completed prior to the event taking place and any necessary action taken, to reduce the risk of any accidents/incidents.
- ❖ Parental consent should be gained prior to any excursion or special event and written information provided for parents/guardians containing all necessary details.
- ❖ Access to the building should be safe and well lit.
- ❖ There should be adequate heating and lighting in the venue.
- ❖ Ensure there is enough space and appropriate activities for all the children.
- ❖ Have a first aid kit and phone available.
- ❖ Check the premises for hazards (e.g. piles of chairs).
- ❖ Check equipment for sharp edges or missing parts.
- ❖ No smoking should be permitted.
- ❖ Fire drills should be carried out at least annually.
- ❖ Any food should be prepared hygienically and carefully.

NB: Parents/guardians are requested to complete a Registration form for any young person who regularly attends a young peoples' activity, detailing emergency contact details, any necessary medical details and giving consent for photograph taking and display, for church purposes.

Procedures If Abuse is Disclosed or Suspected

Definitions of Abuse:

PHYSICAL ABUSE- Actual or likely physical injury to a young person, or failure to prevent physical injury to a young person.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE- The persistent, emotional, ill treatment of a young person that effects the young persons' emotional and behavioural development. It may involve conveying to the young person that they are worthless and unloved, inadequate, or that they are given responsibilities beyond their years.

SEXUAL ABUSE- Involves forcing or enticing a young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the young person is aware of what is happening. This includes no-contact activities such as involving the young person in looking at or in the production of pornographic material or watching sexual activities or encouraging young people to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

NEGLECT- where adults fail to care for young people and protect them from danger seriously impairing health and development.

Signs of Abuse:

Leaders should be aware of the signs of abuse. Young people may suffer from physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. Often it is a series of incidents or an accumulation of concerns which indicate that a young person is being harmed or is at risk from harm.

The following may be an indication of abuse but do not jump to conclusions. Monitor the situation and keep a balance by being watchful.

- ❖ **Changes in mood or behaviour, a young person may withdraw, become clingy or display sudden outbursts of temper.**
- ❖ **Nervousness/watchfulness.**
- ❖ **Sudden underachievement or lack of concentration.**
- ❖ **Change in/inappropriate relationships with adults.**
- ❖ **Attention seeking behaviour.**
- ❖ **Persistent tiredness.**
- ❖ **Injuries not consistent with explanation given for them or conflicting explanations.**
- ❖ **Injuries to parts of body not normally exposed to injury.**
- ❖ **Reluctance to take part in games or swimming.**
- ❖ **Any signs of neglect, under nourishment, untreated illnesses or inadequate care.**
- ❖ **Any allegations made by a young person about abuse.**
- ❖ **Preoccupation with sexual matters and detailed knowledge of adult sexual behaviour.**
- ❖ **Inappropriate sexual language or behaviour.**

WHAT TO DO IF.....

A young person tells you they have been abused:

What to do /say:

- ❖ Keep calm
- ❖ Accept what the young person says
- ❖ Look at the young person as they speak
- ❖ Reassure them with words such as:

“ I believe you”

“It’s not your fault”

“I’ll help you”

“You’ve done the right thing”

- ❖ Explain this is not something you can keep to yourself and that you need to tell the responsible person or encourage the young person to tell them with you.

What NOT to say/do:

“ Why haven’t you told anyone this before?”

“ I don’t believe this.”

“ Are you telling the truth?”

“ I won’t tell anyone.”

“I’ll have to tell your mum and dad.”

Do NOT:

- ❖ Ask questions
- ❖ Ask for any more details

WRITE DOWN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE:

- ❖ What was said
- ❖ Who said it
- ❖ When it was said
- ❖ Where it was said
- ❖ Sign and date it

Inform the Responsible Person who will then liaise with the minister. They may seek advice from Social Services or other appropriate agencies.

WHAT TO DO IF....

You are concerned about a young person:

- ❖ **Write down the concerns you have**
- ❖ **Sign and date the report**
- ❖ **Use a body map to record injuries**
- ❖ **Indicate size of injuries**
- ❖ **Share your concerns with the youth leader/responsible person/minister**
- ❖ **If your concern involves either the youth leader or responsible person refer to the minister.**

CRIMINAL RECORDS BUREAU

As an organisation using the CRB Disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Stockport Baptist Church undertakes to treat all applicants fairly. It undertakes to not discriminate unfairly against any subject of a disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information received.

We welcome people to serve the church on the basis of the right mix of talent, skills, character, potential and calling of God.

However, for the protection of young people, a CRB disclosure will be requested for people seeking to work amongst young people.

A criminal record will not necessarily be a bar to a person serving with children and young people-this will depend on the results of the disclosure. We do not undertake to discriminate unfairly against anyone with a criminal record.

WORKING WITH OFFENDERS

Where someone attending the church is known to have abused young people whilst extending friendship to the individual, the church in its commitment to safeguarding the young people will meet the individual and discuss their boundaries. It may be appropriate to draw up a formal contract between the person who has abused and the church. This might also state that the abuser (until such time as the allegation is cleared or proven) must decline offers of hospitality from church members where there are children or young people in the home.