



**Guidelines for
Ministering to Minors**

05 November 2023

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Purpose & Scope

Contained within this manual are all the policies and procedures for working with and protecting the minors of FBC Tecumseh. The primary focus is to shepherd every child, volunteer, and parent as Jesus has called us. That means watching for dangers, caring for their needs, and protecting them from threats inside and outside the church that may bring them harm. FBC Tecumseh takes the care and protection of our people very seriously as well as safeguarding the practices of the ministries. Some measures may seem extreme or unusual, but they are meant to allow our church to remain above reproach when dealing with expected and unexpected circumstances.

“Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.” (1 Peter 5:8, NLT) The church should be the safest place for our kids. The volunteers and pastoral staff of the church should be the most trusted and well-vetted that we know. The policies and procedures contained here will most of the time be running in the background without interference within the ministries; they are not meant to impede, but to streamline and protect.

This manual will be reviewed periodically for revisions. It has been reviewed and approved by the following individuals:



Clint Bryant, Senior Pastor

05 November 2023

Date

Larry Lockard, Chairman of Deacons

Date

Kyle Fowler, Associate Pastor of Families

Date

Joy Bickers, Children’s Director

Date

Definitions

The following words used within this document and at FBC Tecumseh will be defined as so:

Staff: Any paid employee of FBC Tecumseh. This includes all pastors, ministers, and administrative support.

Pastoral Staff: Specifically refers to the pastors/ministers on staff at FBC Tecumseh. This includes, but is not limited to, the senior pastor, family pastor, and children's director.

Ministry Leader: Staff member directly responsible for that specific ministry (i.e. Youth pastor, children's minister).

Volunteer: Any individual not on staff at FBC Tecumseh who donates their time to working within any ministry of the church. Though the different ministries of the church may have specific titles for their volunteers, for the purpose of this document they are "volunteers."

Children/Youth: To be used interchangeably with "minor", refers to any individual under the age of 18.

Chapter 1: Administration

FBC Tecumseh recognizes that implementation and administration of the policies contained within is a challenging task. It is the responsibility of FBC Tecumseh to ensure, to the best of our ability, that all policies and procedures are adhered to. Any violations will be handled appropriately, with a spirit of love and reconciliation.

A. FBC Tecumseh Child Safety Team

Recognizing the importance of providing and maintaining a safe environment for children, FBC Tecumseh will appoint and maintain a Child Safety Team, which will meet at a minimum bi-annually.

1. Mission Statement

The purpose of the Child Safety Team is to enable FBC Tecumseh's Children's and Youth Ministries to carry out appropriate ministry activities while safeguarding program participants against emotional, physical or sexual abuse and neglect.

2. Composition

The Safety Team shall be comprise of the following members:

- a. Senior Pastor
- b. Family/Youth Pastor
- c. Children's Director
- d. Any designee(s) of the deacon board
- e. Security team leader
- f. (2) Volunteers involved in minor's ministry

3. Meetings

The Senior Pastor will chair the meeting of the Child Safety Team on a bi-annual basis to discuss risk management practices and updates. The Child Safety Team will also meet on an emergency basis upon the recommendation of a member or following the report of any incident or allegation.

4. Responsibilities

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

- a. Applying existing FBC Tecumseh policies and procedures related to minor's safety and risk management issues.
- b. Monitoring all Youth and Children's Ministries' programs for ongoing compliance with safety policies.
- c. Making recommendations regarding safety issues, new policies, and revision of current policies.

- d. Discuss and implement disciplinary actions as appropriate for any violations while ensuring that any violations requiring legal involvement are promptly handled in accordance with state law and this guideline.

B. REPORTING OF VIOLATIONS

FBC Tecumseh has a **zero tolerance for abuse and neglect** in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every staff member and volunteer at FBC Tecumseh to act in the best interest of minors in every program.

1. Suspicious or Inappropriate Behaviors

FBC Tecumseh is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for minors 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 guideline and state law, to the appropriate agency.

- a. In the event that any staff member or volunteer observes any inappropriate behavior (i.e. guideline violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse or neglect (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is that individual's responsibility to immediately report these observations to his or her immediate supervisor, a member of the pastoral staff, an active deacon, or member of the Child Safety Team.
- b. Because sexual abusers "groom" children for abuse, it is possible a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to "groom" a Youth for sexual abuse. Staff members and volunteers are asked to report "grooming" behavior, any violations, or any suspicious behaviors to an immediate supervisor, a member of the pastoral staff, or member of the safety team.

2. Mandatory Reporting

Oklahoma State law (10A O.S. 1-2-101) requires every person, private citizen or professional, who has reason to believe that a child under the age of 18 is a victim of abuse or neglect, to immediately report the matter to the Department of Human Services, at the statewide hotline (1-800-522-3511).

Per 10A O.S. § 1-2-104, the Oklahoma Children's Code and 43A O.S. § 10-104, the Oklahoma Protective Services for Vulnerable Adults Act, any person exercising good faith and due care in making a report of alleged abuse, neglect, or exploitation has immunity from any civil or criminal liability the person might otherwise incur. The person has the same immunity with respect to participation in any judicial proceeding resulting from the report.

C. CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATIONS

1. Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered by the church to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from participation in FBC Tecumseh Children and Youth Ministries. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or appropriate agencies.

2. Any person found to have committed a prohibited act may be prohibited from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming that involves minors at FBC Tecumseh. If the person is a staff member or employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from FBC Tecumseh.

3. Failure to report a violation is grounds for termination of an employee. Volunteers who fail to report a violation may be restricted from participation in any activities involving children or minors at FBC Tecumseh.

Chapter 2: Staff/Volunteer Screening & Training

FBC Tecumseh's Youth or Children's Ministries are unable to operate without staff or volunteers. There is no way possible that we could reach the number of children God has entrusted to us without the selfless commitment from those that God has called to serve our ministries. Staff and volunteers are trusted to be morally, spiritually, ethically above reproach. They are expected to be men and women who are not perfect, but are actively following Jesus and passionate about helping others follow Jesus.

FBC Tecumseh is committed to protecting the children in these ministries from any form of abuse. FBC Tecumseh has a zero-tolerance position that prohibits any act of sexual, emotional or physical abuse or neglect. This zero-tolerance position requires all FBC Tecumseh do it's due diligence in thoroughly screening all individuals working directly with children.

A. REQUIREMENTS

Working with children is an awesome privilege and it is the responsibility of the FBC Tecumseh pastoral staff to shepherd them well; with that in mind there are criteria that all staff and volunteers will meet and maintain. The following list is the minimum for all positions, additional criteria may be requirement for select positions.

1. All Staff & Volunteers

- a. Must be FBC Tecumseh members for minimum of 6 months.
- b. Complete a Staff & Volunteer application.
- c. Submit to a background check every two years.
- d. Complete in person interview with members of the pastoral staff.

B. APPLICATION PROCESS

Because we care for children and desire to protect them, FBC Tecumseh requires all staff members and volunteers working with minors under the age of 18 to complete four safety steps before ministry work or volunteer placement begins.

1. Sexual Abuse Awareness Training

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 keep the child from disclosing the abuse.

To equip FBC Tecumseh staff members and volunteers with information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, FBC Tecumseh requires all staff members and volunteers to complete sexual abuse awareness training. This training will be renewed every two years.

2. Screening Process

Staff members and volunteers are required to complete the FBC Tecumseh's Screening Process, which includes:

- a. An Employment Application (employees only)
- b. A FBC Tecumseh Application to Work with Minors (employees and volunteers)
- c. A face-to-face interview (employees and volunteers)
- d. References to be checked (employees and volunteers)

3. Policies & Procedures

Staff/Volunteers are required to read and understand the FBC Tecumseh Guidelines for Ministering to Minors. Additionally, each staff member/volunteer must execute an acknowledgment form that this entire guideline has been read, understood, and will be followed. Thus, staff members/volunteers MUST address any concerns and/or issues before executing the acknowledgment and initiating work.

4. Criminal Background Check

FBC Tecumseh requires that all staff members and volunteers working or volunteering in Children's or Youth activities or programming undergo a criminal background check. Depending upon position, differing levels or intensity of background check may be required.

C. TRAINING

It is important for staff and volunteers to remain aware of changing policies, be refreshed on current policies, as well gaining and remaining proficient at their assignment to care for minors.

1. Quarterly Training Meeting

Youth and Children's Ministry leaders will conduct training with all staff and volunteers working in their respective ministries at a minimum of once per quarter.

Training should target one of the following topics covered in this guideline:

- a. Abuse, Neglect, & Harm (Chapter 3)
- b. Minor's Safety & Interactions (Chapter 4)

2. Annual Training Meeting

FBC Tecumseh will conduct an annual training meeting for all staff and volunteers working with minors to review current policies and evaluate guideline changes and revisions.

3. Special-Called Training Meeting

- a. In the event of a major guideline addition, revision, or deletion, a special training meeting will be called at the earliest possible time to make all staff and volunteers aware.
- b. A special training meeting should also be held when potential issues begin to arise in order to prevent a violation or event from occurring.

Chapter 3: Abuse, Neglect, & Harm

We never want someone in a situation where they're being abused, neglected, or threatening harm to themselves or someone else. Especially when ministering to minors, it's heartbreaking to think about one of them being hurt, but the reality is it happens more often than we are aware of. It is the position of FBC Tecumseh that we protect our leaders, adults, and minors by seeking to make our facility and any activity sponsored by our church one that is as safe as possible.

The information contained within this chapter will define abuse, neglect, and harm to self or others as well FBC Tecumseh's guideline for reporting.

A. ABUSE & NEGLECT OF MINORS

It is very possible that suspicions or facts arise of abuse or neglect of one of the minors we minister to. We are resolved to do everything in our means to protect minors and adults within the church from abuse or neglect; however no amount of prevention, training, supervision, security, or surveillance can stop every instance.

The following definitions from Oklahoma Code 340:75-3-120 will be used:

1. **PRFC:** person responsible for child
2. **Harm or threatened harm:** any real or threatened physical, mental, or emotional injury or damage to the body or mind of a child that is not accidental including, but not limited to:
 - a. sexual abuse or sexual exploitation;
 - b. neglect;
 - c. dependency.
3. **Abuse:** Harm or threatened harm by a PRFC to a child's health, safety, or welfare including non-accidental physical or mental injury or sexual abuse or sexual exploitation; however, nothing prohibits a parent from using ordinary force as a means of discipline including, but not limited to, spanking, switching, or paddling.
 - a. **Physical abuse:** an injury resulting from punching, beating, kicking, biting, burning, or otherwise harming a child. Even though the injury is not an accident, the PRFC may not have intended to hurt the child.
 - (A) The injury may result from:
 - (i) extreme physical punishment inappropriate to the child's age or condition;
 - (ii) a single episode or repeated episodes that range in severity from significant bruising to death; or
 - (iii) any action including, but not limited to, hitting with a closed fist, kicking, inflicting burns, shaking, or throwing the child, even when no injury is sustained, but the action places the child at risk of grave physical danger.
 - (B) Minor injury of a child older than 10 years of age is not considered physical abuse unless the actions that caused the injury placed the child in grave physical danger.

- b. Sexual abuse:** any sexual activity, including sexual propositioning between the PRFC and child or any sexual acts committed or permitted by the PRFC including, but not limited to:
 - (A) rape;
 - (B) sodomy;
 - (C) incest; and
 - (D) lewd or indecent acts or proposals to a child.

3. Neglect:

- (A) the failure or omission by the PRFC to provide the child with:
 - (i) adequate nurturance and affection, food, clothing, shelter, sanitation, hygiene, or an appropriate education;
 - (ii) medical, dental, or behavioral health care;
 - (iii) supervision or appropriate caretakers to protect the child from harm or threatened harm any reasonable and prudent PRFC would be aware; or
 - (iv) special care made necessary for the child's health and safety by the child's physical or mental condition;
- (B) the failure or omission by the PRFC to protect the child from exposure to:
 - (i) the use, abuse, possession, sale, or manufacture of illegal drugs;
 - (ii) illegal activities; or
 - (iii) sexual acts or materials that are not age-appropriate; or
- (C) abandonment.

4. Abuse and neglect can occur in a number of ways, including, but not limited to peer-peer relationships, guardian-child, church volunteer-minor, etc. All staff and volunteers should make every reasonable effort to safeguard against it and should be aware of common warning signs of abuse and neglect.

5. All staff and volunteers are should review the fact sheet in Appendix 1 of this manual or by reviewing online at <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/whatiscan/>

B. REPORTING ABUSE & NEGLECT

1. Any staff or volunteer who hears about or witnesses any form of abuse/neglect is required to report this to a member of the FBC Tecumseh pastoral staff immediately. No suspicion or accusation should be treated as frivolous.

- 2.** Staff and volunteer should remain calm, listen carefully and take detailed, written notes of the incident/accusation.
- 3.** Staff and volunteers should never make promises to minors that they will “keep it confidential.” When minors say, “I have to tell you something but you must first promise not to tell anyone else,” our response should be something to the effect of “if you trust me enough to tell me, then please trust me enough to do what is best.”
- 5.** Reports of all suspected or known abuse and/or neglect will be made immediately upon notification. It is not the place of the pastor, staff, volunteer, or any persons aside from the appropriate agency to investigate. The FBC Tecumseh Child Safety Team may conduct a review to determine if negligence, lack of supervision, lack of security, or a breach of guideline may have taken place.
- 6.** Within FBC Tecumseh, all staff and volunteers will follow this process for reporting immediately upon becoming aware of a suspected or known abuse:
 - a.** Ensure that the minor is safe from immediate danger. If you witness an immediate risk of harm, call 911 and get immediate police intervention.
 - b.** In the event of obvious abuse or neglect, but not immediate harm, it may be necessary to keep the minor from leaving with the person suspected to be responsible.
 - c.** If the circumstances permit, get as much information as possible from the minor about the situation.
 - d.** Immediately report known or suspected abuse and/or neglect to the nearest or most accessible FBC Tecumseh staff member, deacon, or child safety team member. Notifications may be made via telephone or in person.
 - e.** The person notified will then immediately contact the local law enforcement agency and provide an oral report.
- 1.** Report should contain as much of the following information as possible:
 - a.** Names of the children suspected of being abused or neglected.
 - b.** His or her whereabouts.
 - c.** Names of the persons suspected of harming a child, and their relationship to the child.
 - d.** Birth dates or ages of all children involved.
 - e.** Name and addresses of the parents, guardian, or caretaker.
 - f.** As much specific information as you know about the suspected abuse and neglect.
 - g.** If known, any evidence of previous injuries to the child and any other pertinent information that might establish the cause of such injury or injuries and the identity of the person or persons responsible for the same.
- 2.** Local contact numbers:

- a. Tecumseh Police Department - (405) 598-2115
 - b. Pottawatomie Sheriff's Department - (405) 273-1727
 - c. Child Welfare Services Hotline (800) 522-3511
- f. A determination at this time should be made whether the situation warrants notification of additional parties (i.e. parents, parents of an offending minor, etc.)
- g. In addition to, but not prior to, legal reporting requirements, notification should be made to the Child Safety Team. This notification will come from the senior pastor.
- h. If the situation dictates, the senior pastor, in coordination with Child Safety Team and legal counsel will handle all press communication.

C. Threats of Harm

Threats of harm either to self (suicidal) or to others (homicidal) is a matter that must be handled immediately and with the utmost care and concern for the person making the threats. Every suicidal and homicidal threat or suspicion must be taken seriously.

1. It is inappropriate and dangerous to brush off a threat or suspicion of harm; furthermore, we must be alert to warning signs. In order to protect those in our care, we must do everything in our means to seek immediate help from qualified personnel.
2. Any minor, staff, and/or volunteer may become aware of or suspicion about harm to self or others in any number of ways: social media, direct messaging, text message, phone call, in person, etc.
3. When suspicion arises or you are speaking with someone who is displaying signs or is actually threatening harm to self or others remain calm and follow the procedure below:
 - a. If there is an instance of harm in progress or the threat is immediate, call 911 and get help immediately. Make sure that they do not have access to firearms or prescription drugs.
 - b. If you are not physically with them, do not stop communication until a responsible adult that is aware of the situation is with them.
 - c. Do not leave them alone until they have received help or you have completed a "warm handoff" to another responsible adult that is aware of the situation.
 - d. Notify the minor's parent/caretaker as quickly as possible to the situation.
 - e. Notify a member of the FBC Tecumseh pastoral staff as soon as possible.

Chapter 4: Minors' Safety & Interaction

The following guidance is expected to be followed by all staff and volunteers at all times, to the extent possible. In the event that circumstances dictate a deviation from these guidelines every effort shall be made to notify the Child Safety Team in advance. If advance notification is not possible, it shall be made immediately after the deviation occurs.

A. BUILDING SAFETY

1. The Ministry leader or a designated representative will be responsible for ensuring that the area being utilized is monitored during programming. This will include monitoring of staff members, volunteers and minors in classrooms or meetings.
2. No minor will ever be left unattended or unsupervised during ministry programs or meetings.
3. After every programming event, staff members and volunteers must ensure every room and restroom is checked prior to leaving.
4. Any two minors together in an unseen or less easily viewed area should be redirected to another (more open) area.

B. DIGITAL INTERACTIONS WITH MINORS

As many of our minors now communicate through phones, social media, and other forms of technology, it is important that our staff/volunteers maintain healthy boundaries with minors that are "above reproach." Specifically, staff and volunteers should observe the following guidelines when it comes to communicating with minors over technology:

1. Staff and volunteers should never one-on-one direct message with minors of the opposite sex. Leaders should also be cautious to avoid ongoing, in-depth message chains with minors of the same gender. These online chats should be used to encourage minors and to make connections but not for extended dialogue which may blur the lines between leader and friend.
2. Staff and volunteers should be cautious about what they post on their personal social media websites. Our personal lives should be a good model for minors.
3. For communicating with minors by text, staff and volunteers should never send a private (non-group) text to a minor of the opposite gender. On rare occasions it may be necessary to text a minor of the opposite gender for reasons such as: remind them about an event, rehearsal, meeting, or ongoing ministry tasks (with interns, Youth leaders, etc.). All staff and volunteers should still be cautious when communicating with minors of the same gender and avoid ongoing, in-depth conversations over texts.
4. It is recommended that staff and Volunteers not follow/friend minors they do not already know and have an established relationship with. Even for minors that staff/volunteers do know, it is recommended that they allow minors to initiate the friend/follow request.

C. DISCIPLINE

1. Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any way for behavior management of minors. **No form of physical discipline is acceptable.**
2. Prohibition of physical discipline includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction of inappropriate behaviors.
3. If a minor is unruly or fails to comply with verbal warnings or instructions from staff/volunteers, that minor will be asked to leave (if not endangered by doing so) or the minor's parent will be contacted to pick up that minor up.
4. In the event of a fight or physical altercation, staff/volunteer will verbally redirect minors involved and will try to avoid physical intervention unless the minor poses a danger to others or himself/herself. In these instances, staff/leaders are allowed to restrain a minor with appropriate physical force as needed. This behavior should be reported immediately to parents and a FBC Tecumseh staff member.

D. INTOXICANTS

Staff and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while in any church facility, while traveling with minors, or while working with or supervising minors.

E. MEDIA PRESENTATIONS

1. Staff and volunteers should use good judgment regarding movies and television shows with ratings of G, PG, PG-13, TV-Y, TV-Y7, TV-G, TV-PG, & TV-14. No TV-MA or R-rated movies or shows are permitted.
2. At no time should any videos containing scenes of nudity or even remotely pornographic in nature be shown.
3. All videos, book, magazines or any other form of media will remain above reproach and free of scenes of violence, nudity, and language.
4. Any questionable media should be discussed with the Child Safety Team prior to viewing.

F. NUDITY

1. Staff and volunteers shall never be nude in the presence of minors.
2. 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.), the staff member or volunteer leading the event will communicate a plan to the ministry leader concerning arrangements for showering or changing clothes.

G. ONE-TO-ONE INTERACTIONS WITH MINORS

FBC Tecumseh staff and volunteers should never be alone with minors of the same or opposite gender. However, we recognize that meeting the emotional needs of minors may occasionally require

staff/volunteers to minister to them on an individual basis. Staff/volunteers should observe the following guidelines when planning to hold a counseling session or any one-to-one meeting with a Youth:

1. Staff and volunteers should conduct one-to-one meetings with a minor at a time when others are present and where interactions can be easily observed unless prior approval is obtained from the ministry leader.
2. If a closed-door meeting must occur with a minor, this should be done in a room/office with a window at the church (never in a private residence) and the staff/volunteer member must inform the ministry leader and ensure the door remains unlocked.
3. Never hold a counseling meeting or any other one-on-one meeting with a member of the opposite gender. You may discuss this with a staff member to make alternative plans.
4. Any ongoing meetings with minors (such as counseling, one-on-one discipleship, etc.) should be discussed with the ministry leader for approval.
5. Staff/volunteers are not permitted to date minors in the youth ministry.
6. In the event a staff member or volunteer finds himself/herself alone with a single minor, that staff member or volunteer will take the minor to a room or building occupied by others, or to a location easily observed by others. (Example: If a Youth desires additional conversation or counsel with a staff member or volunteer after regular programming has concluded, move to an adjoining room where other staff members or volunteers are present, or into a public space.)

H. OVERNIGHT EVENTS

It is anticipated that certain Youth Ministry activities/events will require overnight sleeping arrangements to be made for minors and staff/volunteers (i.e. camp, mission trips, etc.). In the event an activity requires sleeping arrangements, staff members and volunteers will strictly observe the following rules:

1. Overnight sleeping arrangements must be discussed with the ministry leader (prior to the activity) and approved.
2. The two-adult rule must be followed. A single minor should not be alone with a staff member or volunteer.
3. All staff/volunteers present must have previously completed the FBC Tecumseh application and screening process.
4. An adult of the same gender as minors is required on all overnight events or activities.
5. As long as any minors are awake, one of the leaders must also be awake and monitoring minors, to ensure safe behavior.
6. Appropriately modest sleeping attire must be worn at all times.

7. For any overnight sleeping arrangements involving both boys and girls, boys and girls must sleep in separate rooms, properly supervised by staff/volunteers of the same gender.
8. No staff/volunteer leader should sleep in the same bed with a minor. In addition, every effort should be made to ensure each minor has their own bed.
9. No staff/volunteer should be alone in a room with a minor unless the door is open.
10. Whenever possible, at least one staff or volunteer will sleep in the same room as minors or in an adjoining room with the door between the rooms kept open.
11. In the event that overnight arrangements do not include standard beds, each staff, volunteer, and minor will use single sleeping bags or blankets. In these instances, a "one-person-to-one bag or blanket" rule will be observed.

I. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

1. Parents whose minor is participating in FBC Tecumseh's activities and programs will be contacted if their child becomes severely ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem.
2. Parents have an open invitation to observe all programs and activities in which their minor is involved. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with programs will be required to complete the volunteer application and screening process.

J. PHYSICAL CONTACT

It is important that all of our staff members and volunteers to understand the difference between appropriate/inappropriate touch with minors. The reality is that appropriate touch is needed and encouraged, but it is vital that staff/volunteers do not blur or cross the lines. In light of this, the following guidelines should be observed:

1. Staff and volunteers should look for opportunities to give plenty of "high fives" and "fist bumps" with minors unless this makes a minor feel uncomfortable.
2. Do not force physical contact, touch, or affection upon a reluctant minor. A minor's preference not to be touched must be respected.
3. Hugs should always be limited to side-hugs. This should be done in public view and should be kept brief.
4. Physical contact should be for the benefit of the minor and never be based upon the emotional needs of a staff member or volunteer.
5. Physical contact and affection should be given only in observable places or when in the presence of other staff and volunteers.
6. No staff/volunteer is allowed to have a sexual relationship with a youth.

7. There is not to be any touching of a minor on their sensitive areas (breasts, buttocks, genitals) even when the minor has been hurt in one of these areas nor even to allow casual contact to these areas over the clothes.
8. No games or activities will be conducted that would allow opportunity to or require someone to come in contact with any sensitive areas.
9. Staff/volunteers are not to sit on the laps of minors or allow minors to sit on their laps.
10. Holding of hands with minors is not allowed unless it's part of a worship/prayer service or as part of a group game.
11. Staff/volunteers should be guarded to never be overly rough with minors during informal interactions, games, etc. to where minors may be unintentionally injured.
12. Staff and volunteers are responsible for protecting minors under their supervision from inappropriate or unwanted touch from others.
13. Any inappropriate behavior or violations of physical contact should be reported immediately to an immediate supervisor, a member of the pastoral staff, or member of the safety team.

K. SEXUALLY ORIENTED CONVERSATIONS & MATERIAL

It is expected that from time to time discussions and lessons may address issues related to purity, dating, sex and human sexuality. In addition, we are aware that minors may have questions/struggles in this area and desire to confide in a trusted adult for guidance. In light of that, here are some guidelines to follow:

1. Staff and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with minors not pertinent to the biblical lesson or question/struggle at hand.
2. Staff and volunteers are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities with any minor in the program even during the course of ministry-approved lessons.
3. Staff and volunteers are not to discuss anything of a sexual nature with minors of the opposite gender. The only exception to this is up-front large group teaching from God's Word on this subject.
4. A great amount of caution should be exercised to teach on topics of sexuality with sensitivity and from a biblical perspective.
5. It is recommended that when possible, adults have another adult present when talking with minors about sensitive issues concerning biblical definitions of sex (such as in a small group setting).
6. Staff and Volunteers are asked to convey to minors only the biblical views on these topics.

7. If a minor's questions or comments on a sexual matter become too detailed or explicit in a group setting, the leader should use discretion and set up another time to meet with this minor.
8. For volunteers who set up a time to meet with a youth about sexual matters, they are asked to first inform the ministry leader.
9. If there is a question as to whether your conversation could possibly be interpreted as a "sexually oriented conversation," you are required to treat the conversation as if it is unquestionably a sexually oriented conversation and follow this guideline accordingly. Then, clarify the question with a member of the pastoral staff.

L. STAFF TO MINOR RATIO

FBC Tecumseh is committed to providing adequate supervision in all ministry activities and programs. Accordingly, the following ratios will be observed :

1. Groups should maintain at least a one staff/volunteer to eight minors ratio.
2. If a worker is out of ratio it is his or her responsibility to immediately notify the ministry leader or staff responsible for the program or event. The responsible staff member will make diligent effort to immediately bring staff member/volunteer-to-youth ratios into compliance with this guideline.
3. With exception of limited circumstances (pre-approved by ministry leader), the "two adult" rule should be maintained. All events and activities should be supervised by at least two unrelated, properly screened staff or volunteers.

M. TRANSPORTATION

Staff members and volunteers may occasionally be in a position to provide transportation for minors. The following guidelines should be strictly observed when leaders are involved in the transportation of minors:

1. Youth-to-minor ratios should be maintained during transportation whenever possible.
2. Minors should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place shall be avoided.
3. Staff and volunteers should avoid transporting only one minor unless approval has been given by the parents in extenuating circumstances.
4. Drivers should never be alone in a vehicle with a minor of the opposite gender.
5. Staff and volunteers should avoid physical contact with minors while in vehicles.
6. Cell phones shall not be used by drivers while transporting minors (other than GPS for directions). Should an obvious emergency situation arise, every effort shall be made to stop vehicle prior to cell phone use. Texting or web surfing is strictly prohibited while driving

7. No minors may drive other minors as part of a FBC Tecumseh event.
8. Drivers should only take the number of minors that they have seatbelts for in the vehicle. Seatbelts should be worn at all times while in the car. No one should be double-buckled. Extra caution should be used when driving minors.

N. TOBACCO

FBC Tecumseh requires staff members and volunteers to abstain from the use or possession of tobacco products (to include e-cigarettes, vapes, etc.) in church facilities, while in the presence of minors or their parents, and during church activities or programs. FBC Tecumseh is a tobacco-free facility.

O. VERBAL INTERACTIONS

FBC Tecumseh expects staff members and volunteers should strive to keep verbal interactions encouraging, constructive, positive, and mindful of their mission of aiding parents in the spiritual growth and development of minors.

1. Staff and volunteers should not talk to minors in a way that is or could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating.
2. Staff and volunteers are expected to refrain from swearing, especially in the presence of minors.
3. Staff and volunteers must never speak to minors, fellow staff members, or volunteers about another minor in a derogatory, subversive, or undermining manner.
4. If staff or volunteers have questions or concerns with policies, teachings, or business of FBC Tecumseh, they should be addressed with the ministry leader or pastoral staff. At no time should staff or volunteers complain or vent to a minor.