



ALL PEOPLES CHURCH

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Children's Church | Teen's Church | Catalyst School Outreach



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1. PREAMBLE & PURPOSE

Each child is a sacred gift from God. Children are our sacred trust from a loving God, and their protection is a non-negotiable moral, spiritual, and legal responsibility.

All Peoples Church (APC) holds an unwavering commitment to the protection, safety, and wellbeing of every child entrusted to its care.

APC seeks to ensure the safety of all children participating in the programs and activities of the church by establishing the following guidelines with regard to the conduct of adults and children. It is our responsibility as adults to do all we can to protect children. Sadly, child abuse is prevalent in this world. It is hurting children, families, and societies everywhere.

The intention of the Child Protection Policy is to protect children entrusted to us at APC's Children's Church, Teen's Church & Catalyst Ministry. The policy is not intended to substantially interfere with the nurturing, teaching, and supervising of children. APC can, through adherence to this Child Protection Policy, make every effort to ensure that people placed in positions of leadership, with respect to the children of the church, are deserving of our trust and responsibility.

This Child Protection Policy is available in the church office and on our APC church website (apcwo.org/ministries/childrens-church).

This Child Protection Policy (hereinafter "the Policy") governs all people without exception — who interact with children across any APC ministry or program, including but not limited to:

- Children's Church
- Teen's Church
- Catalyst — School Outreach Program

This Policy applies to ALL individuals serving in any capacity, including:

- Full-time staff
- Consultants
- Volunteers

2. DEFINITIONS

Child / Minor: Any individual below the age of 18 years, as defined under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, applicable in India.

Adult: Any person aged 18 years or older.

Full-Time Staff/Consultant/Volunteer: Any adult serving in any capacity — paid or unpaid, full-time, consultant, or volunteer, in a ministry or program of APC that involves contact with minors.

Child Abuse: Any act or failure to act by an adult that results in harm, potential for harm, or threat of harm to a child. Child abuse includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Physical Abuse: Any non-accidental physical injury inflicted on a child, including hitting, slapping, kicking, burning, biting, or any other form of corporal punishment.
- b. Emotional / Psychological Abuse: Any behavior that harms a child's emotional development, including persistent belittling, humiliation, shaming, body shaming, rejection, threats,

intimidation, or isolation.

- c. Sexual Abuse: Any sexual act or behavior directed at or involving a child, including but not limited to sexual touching or contact; exposure of genitalia; sexual grooming; sharing, producing, or possessing child sexual abuse material (child pornography); digital, online, or verbal sexual conduct directed at a child.
- d. Neglect: Failure to provide a child with necessities including food, shelter, clothing, medical care, supervision, or emotional nurturing, resulting in harm or risk of harm.
- e. Grooming: Any act intended to establish trust with a child (or their family) for the purpose of facilitating abuse, including unsolicited gifts, secretive communication, or inappropriate emotional relationships.
- f. Exploitation: Using a child for one's own benefit, including financial, sexual, emotional, or any other form of exploitation.

Child Pornography/Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM): Any visual, audio, written, or digital material that depicts a child in a sexual manner. Possession, distribution, production, or consumption of such material is a criminal offence under the POCSO Act and the Information Technology Act, 2000, and will result in immediate reporting to law enforcement.

Child Protection Policy Oversight Group (CPOG): Responsible for overseeing the policy, receiving reports of abuse, conducting training, reviewing applications etc. consists of the Senior Pastor, Associate Pastors and Administrative team.

3. PROHIBITED CONDUCT

No Staff, Consultant, Volunteer shall, at any time:

- a. Engage in, facilitate, or condone any form of physical, emotional, sexual, or psychological abuse against a child.
- b. Touch a child in any manner that is sexual, inappropriate, or causes the child discomfort or distress.
- c. Possess, produce, distribute, or view child sexual abuse material (child pornography) in any form.
- d. Expose or show any adult or inappropriate content to children.
- e. Engage in grooming behavior, including forming secretive relationships with children, giving unsolicited gifts, communicating covertly, or cultivating exclusivity with a child outside of ministry activities.
- f. Use physical punishment of any kind — hitting, slapping, caning, pinching is strictly forbidden. Only when required, use non-violent discipline methods.
- g. Use threatening, degrading, intimidating, or sexually explicit language towards or in the presence of a child.
- h. Be alone with a single child in a closed or unmonitored space.
- i. Transport a child in a private vehicle without prior written parental consent and without another adult present.
- j. Share personal contact information (phone number, social media, email) with a child without parental knowledge and documented ministry approval.
- k. Photograph or record children in any manner without explicit written parental consent.
- l. Share or publish images, videos, or identify information of children on personal or unofficial

platforms.

- m. Administer medication to any child without written parental authorization.
- n. Use alcohol, controlled substances, or be under the influence of any intoxicant while serving in any ministry involving children.
- o. Make discriminatory remarks or engage in discriminatory conduct based on gender, caste, religion, disability, or any other characteristic.
- p. Ignore, fail to report, or actively conceal any suspected or disclosed instance of child abuse.

4. SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS & OPERATIONAL PROTOCOLS

We must be prepared to both acknowledge and practice prevention of all types of child abuse and neglect and to strengthen families. This policy applies to all church ministries, including but not limited to Children's Church, youth activities, Kids conference, church camp, youth ministry and mentoring.

APC Commits to:

4.1 Offer trainings

- a. Annually, relevant information, training and materials will be offered to teachers and volunteers of children who serve at APC's Children's Church. Training may be specific to child abuse or may be on a related topic such as child safety, child development, healthy family relationships, or any protective or risk factor for abuse.
- b. Every two years, training for all children (ages six to eighteen) related to child abuse and/or child safety (such as safe touch for elementary-aged children) will take place. This training should be appropriate to the child's age group. Parents will be invited to participate in training with their children.

4.2 Make our church facilities safe for children

- a. A fully stocked first-aid kit will be available in the church building.
- b. Our church facilities are open to strangers and unknown people. Example: security guards, cooks, construction workers, drivers, men attending non church related meetings, college students coming for interviews and exams, and many other activities going on simultaneously. Our Children's Church Ministers and parents of children and those attending APC should be alert and watch for any suspicious or undesired activities or advances towards children. Raise an alarm immediately.

4.3 Provide safe and adequate supervision to children

Since the needs and requirements are different in each church location, the following safety measures should be adopted to suit these requirements for each location.

- a. Follow a two-adult rule, especially at overnight activities involving children and when activities are being conducted in homes or other private locations.
- b. A parent must always be notified ahead of time and give consent for his/her child to be transported away from church facilities.
- c. No physical discipline (hitting, slapping) may be used. When a child misbehaves, an adult may use non-violent discipline methods / redirection and/or verbal means to guide the child's behavior. If this does not work, the child shall be taken to his/her parents for further action.

- d. All APC Children's Church teachers/helpers wear stickers or nametags.
- e. Toddler playgroup – mandatory one parent is always with his/her toddler during the toddler playtime.
- f. Grades 1 & 2 must always have two adults (teacher and helper) in attendance during Children's Church. Children can never be left alone without a Children's Church Minister or helper (adult) being present.
- g. Children under the age of 10 cannot leave the classroom and walk to the washroom without an adult accompanying them. The adult must stay outside the washroom until the child is done and accompany him/her back to class. Adults must never enter a washroom occupied by a child of the opposite gender.
- h. Children must not be left unsupervised in and out of classes or around the church campus.
- i. Classrooms should be located as close as possible to the main service area. Classroom doors should always be kept open.

4.4 Off-Campus Activities (Catalyst — School Outreach)

Staff, Consultants and Volunteers participating in the Catalyst School Outreach Program must:

- a. Conduct private or one-on-one counseling sessions with students only in allotted classrooms under the approval of the school management.
- b. Comply with the school's own safeguarding and child protection policies in addition to APC's Policy.
- c. Report any concerns arising from school visits to the CPOG immediately.

4.5 Communication Standards

All communication between teachers and children must be transparent and conducted through official church channels, with parental awareness. Direct messaging, private social media contact, or personal phone calls to children are not permitted. Group messaging for ministry purposes must include a parent or the CPOG as a participant.

4.6 Photography & Media

Consent from a parent or guardian is required before photographing or recording any child. Images of children may only be published on official APC channels for ministry purposes.

5. STAFF, VOLUNTEER & CONSULTANT SCREENING & ONBOARDING

APC is committed to ensuring that only suitable, vetted individuals work with children. The following requirements are mandatory for all Staff, Consultants & Volunteers:

5.1 Six-Month Rule

No individual may serve in any children's or youth ministry until they have been a regular, consistent attendee at APC for a minimum of six (6) months. This requirement cannot be waived.

5.2 Annual Policy Acknowledgement

Everyone must read, sign, and submit the APC Child Protection Agreement Form on an annual basis. Failure to submit a current signed form will result in suspension of the individual from all children's

ministries until compliance is achieved.

5.3 Mandatory Training

All individuals must attend APC's Child Safeguarding Training before commencing service. Refresher training will be conducted annually.

6. MANDATORY REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

6.1 Who Must Report

If anyone witnesses, suspects, or receives a disclosure of any form of child abuse or inappropriate conduct, they are legally and morally obligated to report it immediately.

6.2 How to Report

Reports must be made immediately to any member of the Child Protection Oversight Group (CPOG). If the suspected abuser is a member of the CPOG, the report must be made directly to the Senior Pastor. Reports should include as much detail as possible, including the child's name, the nature of the concern, dates, and any witnesses.

6.3 APC's Obligation to Report to Authorities

Upon receiving a credible report of child abuse, APC will:

- a. Remove the alleged offender immediately from all contact with children, pending investigation.
- b. Notify the child's parents or guardians, unless doing so would place the child at further risk.
- c. Report the matter to the relevant government authorities.
- d. Cooperate fully with any statutory investigation.
- e. Document all findings and maintain confidential records.

6.4 Confidentiality & Non-Retaliation

Reports made in good faith will be treated with confidentiality to the extent permitted by law. APC strictly prohibits retaliation against any individual who makes a report in good faith. Any form of retaliation itself will be treated as a serious misconduct.

7. CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATION

Any violation of this Policy will be treated with the utmost seriousness. Consequences include, but are not limited to:

- a. Immediate suspension from all ministry activities involving children, pending investigation.
- b. Permanent disqualification from serving in any children's or teens/youth ministry at APC.
- c. Termination of employment (Staff & Consultant) or volunteer status.
- d. Reporting to relevant government and law enforcement authorities.
- e. Civil and/or criminal prosecution as applicable under Indian law.

APC reserves the right to report staff, volunteer, consultant — to the appropriate legal authorities without prior notice, where the evidence or disclosure indicates a risk to a child's safety.

This Policy shall be reviewed annually by the CPOG and updated as required to reflect changes in

legislation, best practices, and ministry needs. All Staff, Consultants and Volunteers will be notified of any material changes and required to sign an updated Agreement Form.

ALL PEOPLES CHURCH - CHILD PROTECTION POLICY ACCEPTANCE STATEMENT

To be completed by all Staff, Consultants & Volunteers before commencing service

IMPORTANT: This is a legally binding declaration. Please read the copy of the All Peoples Church Child Protection Policy provided to you. Please sign below to indicate that you have read and understood the Policy and agree to comply with the policies and procedures outlined therein when working with children. Providing false information is grounds for immediate disqualification.

I, (Full Name) _____, understand that working with children and teenagers is a sacred trust.

I HAVE READ and UNDERSTAND and AGREE TO ABIDE BY the Child Protection Policy of All Peoples Church, Bangalore.

By signing this document, I solemnly agree to the following:

1. **Commitment to Care:** I will treat every child and teenager with the utmost respect, care, and dignity at all times.
2. **Background Affirmation:** I hereby solemnly affirm and declare that I have never been involved in, investigated for, accused of, charged with, or convicted of any offence involving violence against a child, child sexual abuse, child exploitation, grooming, or the possession, distribution, or consumption of child sexual abuse material (CSAM).
3. **Acknowledgment of Consequences:** I understand that any violation of this policy or any failure to meet these standards will result in my immediate removal from ministry. I further acknowledge that APC will report any suspected criminal conduct to government authorities and that I may face legal prosecution.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____