

**PRINCIPLES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES FOR THE PREVENTION OF  
ABUSE  
Bride of Hope Ministries  
Instituted October 2006; updated Summer of 2022**

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## INTRODUCTION

The issue of abuse is relevant because we live in an imperfect world. Abuse happens in the general society and it has happened within the church as well. This policy will seek to address three specific areas of concern about the prevention of abuse and responses to it. First, the behavior of all participants in the ministries at Bridge of Hope must be guided by what God tells us in the Bible. Second, an abuse prevention policy flows from our understanding of God's Word and guides our actions at Bridge of Hope ministries. And third, an appropriate response to victims and perpetrators of abuse is necessary as we seek to protect and guide each member of our congregation.

The purpose of this abuse policy is not to create an atmosphere of hysteria or to police religious leaders. Instead, this document intends to offer guidance, safeguard the people, and map out appropriate steps to be taken should accusations of misconduct arise.

## BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES

*“People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, ‘Let these little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.’ And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.”* (Mark 10:13-16)

We recognize that we are a reflection of God's love to the youth in our care. We take seriously our responsibility to them. We view ourselves as partners with parents, seeking to provide the highest quality care and instruction for our youth and children's ministries in order to foster and nurture a trustworthy environment where persons can grow in the Christian faith. People need to be able to depend on the church to be a safe place and to trust that those who minister to them act with integrity and trustworthiness. The purpose of implementing these policies and procedures is to protect our children and youth from physical, emotional, and sexual abuse in the church.

*“The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion – to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.”* (Isaiah 61:1-3)

*“The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever.”* (Isaiah 32:17)

People with emotional hurts and wounds need healing from Jesus Christ. When the church is faithful in seeking and obeying God's will, then Jesus' healing touch is given to those who are hurt. Peace comes into peoples' lives. The abuse prevention policy guides our behavior and points us towards the righteousness that God desires from us.

## TYPES OF ABUSE AND THE INDICATORS OF THAT ABUSE

*The following is an overview of different types of abuse and their indicators. We're providing this information to help the church identify abuse before it begins or to recognize current abuse. Though abuse is not a frequent occurrence in the church, it can happen, and should be identified and dealt with immediately.*

It is important to acknowledge that children can exhibit a sign or signs of abuse whether they are victims of abuse or not. If a child is a victim of abuse, s/he often will exhibit several of the signs at any one time. A child may have signs and/or symptoms if there is other trauma in their lives such as divorce, loss of a significant figure, witnessing abuse, puberty/hormonal changes, or a series of emotional and mental disorders. **If you suspect one of the following types of abuse due to the listed signs and symptoms or others, please read and follow the REPORTING section in this document.**

Abusers can be:

- parents, siblings, or other relatives
- childcare professionals
- clergy, teachers, or athletic coaches
- neighbors or friends
- other children
- strangers

### Four Types of Abuse and Their Indicators

1. **Physical abuse** can include the following actions when they are done intentionally to harm a child:

- hitting
- throwing
- kicking
- choking
- biting
- shaking
- beating with an object
- burning with a match, cigar, or cigarette
- scalding with hot water
- pushing and holding a child underwater
- tying up a child
- starving or failing to provide food for a child

### Physical Indicators of Physical Abuse

- Unexplained Bruises and Welts
  - On face, lips, mouth
  - On torso, back, buttocks, thighs
  - In various stages of healing
  - Clustered, forming regular pattern
  - Reflecting shape of article used to inflict; electric cord or belt buckle
  - On several different surface areas; regularly appear after absence, weekend or vacation
- Unexplained Burns
  - Cigar, cigarette burns, especially on soles, palms, back or buttocks
  - Immersion burns; sock-like, glove-like, doughnut shaped on buttocks or genitalia, patterned like electric burner, iron
  - Rope burns on arms, legs, neck or torso
- Unexplained Fractures
  - To skull, nose, facial structure in various stages of healing
  - Multiple or spiral fractures
- Unexplained Lacerations or Abrasions
  - To mouth, lips, gums, eyes

- To external genitalia
- Loss of Bowel Control

### **Behavioral Indicators of Physical Abuse**

- Wary of adult contacts
- Apprehensive when other children cry
- Behavioral extremes; aggressiveness or withdrawal
- Frightened of parents
- Afraid to go home
- Reports injury by parents
- Changes in social behavior
  - Regression to an earlier stage of social development
  - Excessive crying or clinging
- Use of explicit language beyond the child's comprehension
- Fascination with fire

**Corporal (physical) punishment** is distinguished from physical abuse in that physical punishment is the use of physical force with the intent of inflicting bodily pain, but not injury, for the purpose of correction or training. Physical abuse is an injury that results from physical aggression. However, physical punishment easily gets out of control and can become physical abuse; therefore it should be used sparingly and with caution.

**Shaken baby/shaken impact syndrome** is a specific form of physical abuse caused by shaking an infant. Most incidents last just 5 to 20 seconds, but that's enough time to cause sufficient brain damage and/or to kill the baby. In some cases, a blow to the head accompanies the shaking.

2. **Physical neglect** can be the following if they interfere with a child's growth and development:

- not providing adequate housing or warm clothing in cold weather
- locking a child in a closet or room
- leaving a child alone for extended periods of time
- not providing medical care when a child is sick or injured
- placing a child in a physically dangerous situation

### **Physical Indicators of Physical Neglect**

- Consistent hunger
- Poor hygiene
- Inappropriate dress
- Consistent lack of supervision, especially in dangerous activities for long periods
- Unattended physical problems or medical needs; abandonment

### **Behavioral Indicators of Physical Neglect**

- Begging, stealing food
- Extended stays at school; early arrival and late departure
- Constant fatigue, listlessness or falling asleep in class
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Delinquency; thefts
- Child states there is no caretaker

3. **Emotional abuse** occurs when a parent ignores, terrorizes, blames, belittles, or otherwise makes a child feel that he's worthless and incompetent. Emotional abuse is any attitude, behavior, or failure to act on the part of the caregiver that interferes with a child's mental health or social development.

Other names for emotional abuse are:

- verbal abuse
- mental abuse
- psychological maltreatment or abuse

Emotional abuse can range from a simple verbal insult to an extreme form of punishment. The following are examples of emotional abuse:

- ignoring, withdrawal of attention, or rejection
- lack of physical affection such as hugs
- lack of praise, positive reinforcement, or saying "I love you"
- yelling or screaming
- threatening or frightening
- negative comparisons to others
- belittling; telling the child he or she is "no good," "worthless," "bad," or "a mistake"
- using derogatory terms to describe the child, name-calling
- shaming or humiliating
- habitual scapegoating or blaming
- using extreme or bizarre forms of punishment, such as confinement to a closet or dark room, tying to a chair for long periods of time, or terrorizing a child
- parental child abduction
- not attending to the child's needs, including need for affection
- failure to provide necessary psychological care
- domestic violence in the child's presence, such as spousal or partner abuse
- drug and alcohol abuse in the presence of the child, or allowing the child to participate in drug and alcohol use

#### **Physical Indicators of Emotional Abuse**

- Speech disorders
- Lags in physical development
- Failure to thrive

#### **Behavioral Indicators of Emotional Abuse**

- Habit disorders: sucking, biting, rocking
- Conduct disorders: antisocial, destructive
- Neurotic traits: sleep disorders, inhibited play
- Psychoneurotic reactions: hysteria, obsession, compulsion, phobias, hypochondria
- Behavior extremes: compliant, passive or aggressive, demanding
- Overly adaptive behavior: inappropriately adult or inappropriately infant
- Developmental lags: mental, emotional
- Attempted suicide
- Child reports no care or love in home

4. **Sexual abuse** is any sexual action taken with or in front of a child it may include the following:

- fondling, touching, or kissing a child's sex organs
- making a child touch someone else's sex organs
- having sex with a child
- showing a child pornographic material
- showing sex organs to a child
- forcing a child to undress
- forcing a child to have sex with someone
- making a child pose or perform for pornographic pictures or videos
- telling a child "dirty" stories

## Physical Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Pain or itching in genital area
- Bruises or bleeding in external genitalia, vaginal or anal areas
- Venereal disease, especially in pre-teens
- Pregnancy

## Behavioral Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Unwilling to change for gym or participate in physical education class
- Withdrawal, fantasy or bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual behavior or knowledge
- Poor peer relationships
- Delinquent or runaway behavior
- Attempting sexual behavior with other children or adults
- Reports sexual assault by caretaker

## REPORTING SUSPECTED OR ALLEGED ABUSE

If you suspect there is abuse or neglect of a child, or if a child reports that he/she has been abused by a caregiver; the following procedure for reporting should be followed. Keeping in mind to remain calm and nonjudgmental at all times.

1. A member of the child abuse prevention team and one or more of the following persons should be contacted: (If you suspect one of these individuals to be the perpetrator, contact one of the other individuals on the list.)

- President of the Council
- Vice President of the Council
- The Pastor

2. Individual contacted should immediately follow up with at least one (preferably more) of the listed individuals in order to ensure accountability and consistency within the church. The matter is to be kept confidential from the general church body until the appropriate time to be determined by the Council and Pastor.

3. The state authorities should be notified within 24 hours if the act includes physical or sexual abuse, physical neglect, domestic violence in the presence of children, or if the abuse is of a mentally or physically challenged adult

State Department of Human Services  
Website [www.dhs.state.ia.us/reportingchildabuse.asp](http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/reportingchildabuse.asp)  
Hotline: 1-800-362-2178

If unsure if it is a criminal act as listed, contact the County Attorney:

Local County Attorney:  
Email: [attorney@siouxcounty.org](mailto:attorney@siouxcounty.org)  
Phone: 712-737-2457  
Fax: 712-737-4560

*(The state of Iowa has a mandatory reporting law. This means that people in certain professions must report child abuse. According to Iowa law, six classes of professionals must report suspected abuse within 24 hours from the time they notice the suspected abuse. Those professions are: health, mental health, education, law enforcement, child care and social work. These people are required by Iowa law to complete a training course in mandatory reporting of abuse.)*

4. If it is determined by authorities that the act was not criminal/child abuse in nature, the Council and Pastor should determine the intervention point, intervening with the accused and the accuser separately, and discreetly.

5. If it is determined that abuse or neglect has occurred, the Council and Pastor must establish an appropriate course of action including but not limited to pastoral counseling, no contact between the accuser and the accused, suspension from position or duty if one is held and other appropriate consequences under church order.

6. If the matter involves the Pastor, it should also be submitted to the Classis.

Finally, each case must be examined carefully and handled with the utmost confidentiality and respect for both the accuser and the accused. This policy is a general guideline. If a particular case requires a deviation from these guidelines for the good of the child or the church body, the intent remains to seek justice and truth and keep the children of our congregation safe.

## **GUIDELINES FOR RESPONDING TO VICTIMS OF ABUSE**

Responding to a victim of abuse in a compassionate, loving and affirming manner is crucial. A victim often believes the abuse was caused by the victim and that he/she deserved the abuse. The victim often feels extreme shame and recoils at the thought of other people knowing what happened. Therefore, the following guidelines for responding to a victim of abuse are offered:

(The following responses are focused on a child but many of the same principles apply to adult victims.)

- Take the child seriously when s/he tells the story.
- Avoid judgmental statements such as, "what did you do."
- Do not appear frightened or disgusted by the child's story, since this may cause the child to stop talking or to believe you are upset with the child. Appearing disgusted could also reinforce a victim's sense of shame stemming from the abuse.
- Do not try to convince the child that the story isn't true or that it didn't happen the way the child reports it did.
- Do not make promises to the child that you will not tell anyone what has been shared with you.
- Remind the child that whatever happened was not his/her fault.
- Remind the child that it was a good decision to tell someone what happened to him/her.
- Tell the child that it's your job to keep him/her safe so you will find help so the incident can be prevented from happening again.
- Do not offer the child a reward for telling the story or promise a gift if the child tells another adult.
- Reassure the child that s/he does not deserve to be hurt by anyone.
- Do not frighten the child by talking about police involvement or medical examinations to verify complaint; instead, share with the child that other people need to know about what happened, and they will talk to the child later.
- Do not ask the child to show you any bruises that are underneath the child's underwear or clothing; only observe those bruises accessible without violating a person's privacy. In some communities, removing a child's clothing even to confirm a report of abuse is a violation of the law.
- Do not investigate the child's story; rather, listen to the story, and take notes immediately afterwards while it is still fresh in your memory.
- Do not tell the child that s/he has been abused.
- Offer to support the child and remind the child that you care about him/her.
- Follow BOH reporting procedures

## **GUIDELINES FOR RESPONDING TO PARENTS OF VICTIMS OF ABUSE**

- Remain calm and nonjudgmental.
- Anyone who makes a report to the police or child protection authorities is usually granted anonymity; do not identify the reporter unless you are given permission to do so.
- Do not share any statements made by the child with a parent or relative who is implicated by the child as an abuser. It is advisable not to share the child's statements with anyone other than the authorities until the child can be protected from the abuser. Simply tell them that you are following BOH reporting procedures and advise that they will be contacted by church leaders.
- Do not attempt to convince a parent that the alleged abuse happened or did not happen.
- Do not attempt to discredit the child or cast suspicion on the alleged abuser.
- Do not investigate with a parent what may be happening in the home; and do not share information with a parent that has not been shared with the authorities.
- Do not make any promises to a parent about the outcome of the investigation.
- Listen to any information a parent may offer about the incident and record it immediately after the conversation; report additional information to authorities through the reporting procedure outlined in the church's policy.

- Offer parent(s) support.
- Listen and allow parent(s) to express their disbelief, shock, anger, and grief. Parent(s) may be in shock and denial upon hearing of abuse allegations.
- Do not minimize the type of abuse, its impact on the child, or its harm to the child.
- Suggest resources for parent(s), including books or literature that may be helpful to them.
- Assure parent(s) of the confidential nature of the report and the need to maintain confidentiality unless disclosure is necessary to protect the well-being of other children.

## **GUIDELINES FOR RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGED PERPETRATOR OF ABUSE**

Even though our hearts are dismayed by the thought of a person abusing a child in any sort of manner, we still must seek to view and approach the alleged perpetrator as a person bearing God's image. Just as Jesus loved the adulterous woman who was about to be stoned (John 8:1-11) and just as Jesus loves each of us, we are called to love the person caught in sin. Bearing in mind that each of us is unworthy of God's love, grace and mercy, we are then able to give grace and love to others. The following includes some guidelines for responding to the alleged perpetrator of abuse:

- First of all, pray for God's help in loving the alleged abuser.
- Seek to understand that the alleged abuser is caught in sin and needs help in receiving the freedom that Christ offers all sinners.
- Seek to understand that abuse often happens as a result of pain that the abuser has experienced him/herself. The abuser needs healing in various ways.
- Seek to treat the person with respect. Part of that respect includes talking to him/her respectfully, keeping confidentiality which means refusing to gossip and showing care about how that person is feeling.
- Encourage and provide accountability for actions. "Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret..." (II Cor. 7:10). Repentance means that a person turns away from sin and turns towards God and a changed life. Accountability enables the person to change and turn away from sin.

## **GUIDELINES PERTAINING TO CRITERIA FOR SAFE SUPERVISION**

These guidelines are designed to protect children, youth, and vulnerable adults from harm, and protect persons involved in the ministry of BOH who may be falsely accused. If any child abuse is suspected (physical, emotional, or sexual), volunteers should refer to "Guidelines for Responding to Victims of Abuse" (p.7) and "Reporting Suspected or Alleged Abuse" (p. 6). All information will be kept confidential to the extent that it is legally possible to do so.

- Policy-training sessions will be held at the beginning of each church program year. If necessary, additional training sessions will be held at other times during the year.
- At all church-sponsored functions involving the supervision of children, youth, or vulnerable adults, either the Two Adult Rule or the Rule of Three will be practiced.
  - 1. The Two-Adult Rule: At least two screened individuals must be present at every function and in each classroom, vehicle, or other enclosed area during all activities involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
  - 2. The Rule of Three: At least three individuals (at least one must be a screened adult and the remaining two no younger than 5 years of age) must be present at every function and in each classroom, vehicle, or other enclosed area during all activities involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
- Prospective volunteers must be associated with the ministry BOH for at least six months before supervising children, youth, or vulnerable adults. This requirement may be waived by a vote of the Church Council based upon reports from church members in good standing who have personal knowledge of the prospective volunteer. These volunteers will be screened each year by the Youth Discipleship Director or Youth Discipleship Team.

## **NURSERY GUIDELINES PERTAINING TO CHILD-ABUSE PREVENTION**

These nursery guidelines are designed to protect children from harm and to protect persons involved in nursery care from being falsely accused. If any child abuse or neglect is suspected (physical, emotional, or sexual), volunteers should refer to "Guidelines for Responding to Victims of Abuse (p.7)" and "Reporting Suspected or Alleged Abuse" (p. 6). All information will be kept confidential to the extent that it is legally possible to do.

- All adults and youth 16 and older must complete a volunteer application for children's ministry and turn it into the child abuse prevention team. Only approved adults will be allowed to serve in nursery. Nursery volunteers will be reviewed and approved each year by the child abuse prevention team.
- Adult nursery or classroom attendants should be from different families in order to protect from allegations of abuse and/or conspiracy to abuse



- No child should be left unattended in the nursery at any time.
- Attendants should never take a child out of nursery. Parents should be contacted if a problem occurs with the child.
- Parents or adults who pick their children up from the nursery or classroom should do so in a timely manner—approximately within 15 minutes of the end of the service or meeting time.
- Parents utilizing the nursery should adhere to the sign in/sign out policy that will be approved by the church council and implemented by the volunteer coordinator(s). Special care instructions (including restroom assistance) must be noted on the sign-in form. Only parents or adults who bring the child to the nursery or classroom may remove that child unless expressly cleared with the attendant by the parent/adult before the class begins and the appropriate sign in/sign out guidelines are followed.
- Accidents or illnesses must be reported immediately to the child’s parent/guardian. An **Accident or Incident should be reported to parents immediately.**
- Attendants should never use physical restraints (such as tying, or holds) or punish children. If assistance is needed, the parent or adult that brought the child should be summoned. If that parent or adult is unavailable, another attendant should assist until they are available.
- Diaper changing should only be done by a parent of the child
- Bathroom procedure: Volunteers the same sex as the child shall assist in bathroom use.
- **Minors under the age of 16 should not be left in nursery in care of children without adult supervision**
- Always be mindful of how a child may view being touched. Some situations may cause the child to be sensitive and/or fearful of physical touch. Limit touch to a brief side hug or pat on the back.
- Individuals whom have been convicted of a felony or child related crime will not be allowed to serve with our children or youth ministries program.
- Any individual that suspects a child has been abused within or outside of church is mandated to report per our reporting procedures stated in BOH policy.

## **SUPERVISION GUIDELINES FOR PROMISE LAMBS AND SUNDAY SCHOOL**

These guidelines are designed to protect children, youth, and vulnerable adults from harm and protect persons involved in the ministry of BOH who may be falsely accused. If any child abuse or neglect is suspected (physical, emotional, or sexual), volunteers should refer to “Guidelines for responding to victims” (p. 7), and “Reporting Suspected or Alleged Abuse” (p. 6). All information will be kept confidential to the extent that it is legally possible to do.

- Those serving with BOH youth and Sunday School ministries will participate in pre-service instruction. Additional trainings may occasionally be administered by the child abuse prevention team.
- Promise Lambs and Sunday School teachers should be at least 16 or older to serve in these ministries.
- Only approved adults and leaders should be present in children’s ministry rooms.
- Parents or adults who pick their children up from the classroom should do so in a timely manner—approximately within 15 minutes of the end of the service or meeting time.
- Leaders should never use physical restraints (such as tying or holds) or punish children. If assistance is needed, the parent or adult that brought the child should be summoned. If that parent or adult is unavailable, another attendant should assist until they are available.
- Members of the child abuse prevention team are authorized to observe classrooms where the Two-Adult Rule or The Rule of Three is practiced.
  - The Two-Adult Rule: At least two screened individuals must be present at every function and in each classroom, vehicle, or other enclosed area during all activities involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
  - The Rule of Three: At least three individuals (at least one must be a screened adult and the remaining two no younger than 5 years of age) must be present at every function and in each classroom, vehicle, or other enclosed area during all activities involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
- Bathroom procedure: Volunteers the same sex as the child shall assist in bathroom use. No males should assist girls in bathroom use. Parents of promise lamb’s children are advised to take their children to the restroom prior to promise lambs meeting. Children will first be asked to wait to use the restroom until a parent or the two adult rule or rule of three can be implemented. If special assistance is needed for a special needs individual, arrangements should be made with the parent or adult guardian.
- Always be mindful of how a child may view being touched. Some situations may cause the child to be sensitive and/or fearful of physical touch. Limit touch to a brief side hug or pat on the back.
- Individuals who have been convicted of a felony or child related crime will not be allowed to serve with our children or youth ministries program.

- Those serving in a leadership position with the youth will be required to complete a criminal background check in addition to completing the youth ministries application every other year, or first-time serving.
- Any individual that suspects a child has been abused within or outside of church is mandated to report per our reporting procedures stated in BOH policy.
- Leaders will be given a copy of the CRC Code of Ethics and agree to adhere to the policy

## **CRC Code of Conduct for Ministry Leaders (amended by Synod 2022)**

### **Code of Conduct**

Abuse of power is a misuse of position, authority, or influence to take advantage of, manipulate, or control. Abuse of power occurs when a person with power, regardless of its source, uses that power to harm and/or influence another for personal gain at the other's expense. All abuse by faith leaders within the church is also spiritual abuse and has spiritual impacts that often heighten the harm caused to individuals and to the family of God. (For more background, see *Acts of Synod 2019*, pp. 587-615).

As a ministry leader, I commit to the following:

#### *Confidentiality*

I will use confidentiality appropriately, which means I will hold in confidence whatever information is not mine to share. I will not use information shared with me in confidence in order to elevate my position or to depreciate that of others.

My use of confidentiality will also be guided by mandatory reporting as required by law.

#### *Relational*

I will speak and act, in all my personal and professional relations, in ways that follow the pattern of Christ, who used his power to serve (1 Pet. 5; Mark 10; Phil. 2; 2 Tim. 4:2).

I will conduct myself with respect, love, integrity, and truthfulness toward all—regardless of position, status, race, gender, age, or ability.

To the best of my ability, I will contribute to an environment of hospitality.

#### *Financial*

I will ensure that funds are used for their intended ministry purposes.

In all financial matters, including the acceptance of gifts, I will act with scrupulous honesty, transparency, and appropriate accountability.

I will appropriately use accepted accounting practices and regular reviews and/or audits.

#### *Intimate Relationships*

I will maintain standards and appropriate boundaries in all relationships, which are informed by the Scriptures.

I will keep all of my professional relationships free from inappropriate emotional and sexual behaviors. This includes not engaging in inappropriate intimate contact or a sexual relationship, unwanted physical contact, sexual comments, gestures, or jokes.

#### *Safety*

I will actively promote a safe environment where all persons are respected and valued, where any form of abuse, bullying, or harassment is neither tolerated nor allowed to take place.

I will report known or suspected cases of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect of minors to the proper government authorities.

I will support adults who disclose physical, sexual, or emotional abuse in a way that appropriately empowers the person who has been victimized.

#### *Spiritual*

I will acknowledge the use of Scripture and the Spirit's work in the community of the church and, therefore, refrain from presuming to be the sole "voice of God."

I will teach, admonish, or discipline in ways that are biblical and Christlike, and I will seek other people's well-being (Matthew 18; Colossians 1:28; 3:16).

I will use my position as a way to serve the body of believers, rather than myself, for the common good and the cultivation of the gifts of the Spirit.

#### *Additional Commitments*

I will work within my professional competence, especially in counseling situations, and I will refer individuals to other professionals as appropriate.

I will promote truthfulness, transparency, and honesty in all of my work.

I will disclose any perceived or actual conflict of interest.  
In all that I do, I will seek to use my position, power, and authority prudently and humbly and in nonexploitive ways.

In the event that I misuse my power, either intentionally or unintentionally, as a ministry leader, I will acknowledge the harm that has been caused and the trust that has been broken, and I will actively seek restoration with justice, compassion, truth, and grace. I will humbly submit to the insight and accountability of others to ensure that I use any power entrusted to me fully in service to Christ.

## Volunteer Application for Promise Lambs, Sunday School and Youth Group Leaders

This application is to be completed by all applicants who wish to be involved with the children's/youth ministries. Bridge of Hope believes strongly in forgiveness and helping those who have indiscretions in their past, but in an effort to protect the children who participate in our programs and to protect the volunteers who work with the children and/or youth, this information must be collected in addition to completing a background check through SCREENING ONE. This information is **CONFIDENTIAL** and will only be used by the child abuse prevention team and the church council. With the exception of an investigation of abuse allegations where the information provided can help stop or prevent abuse within the church body.

### VOLUNTEER'S PERSONAL INFORMATION USED FOR BACKGROUND CHECKS

FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ MIDDLE INITIAL \_\_\_\_\_ LAST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CELL NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ :

BIRTHDATE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

HOW LONG HAVE YOU ATTENDED BRIDGE OF HOPE? \_\_\_\_\_ ARE YOU A MEMBER? \_\_\_\_\_

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_ (used only for the purposes of the background check)

ANY ADDITIONAL NAMES THAT YOU HAVE USED IN THE PAST INCLUDING MAIDEN NAMES:

\_\_\_\_\_

### VOLUNTEER BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Have you ever been accused, investigated, or pled guilty to child abuse or any type of sexual misconduct? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been arrested, convicted, or pled guilty to a crime? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there any fact, circumstance, or pattern involving your background that would make it inappropriate for you to serve with minors or would compromise the integrity of the church or your service? \_\_\_\_\_

Please explain any of the above in which you answered "yes" (use the back if needed) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Volunteer's Agreement Statement and Permission to Run Background Check

The information I have provided is correct to the best of my knowledge. I have read and understand Bridge of Hope Ministry's policy on abuse and supervision practices. I agree to its regulations and mandates and will adhere to them. I understand that past or current allegations or legal charges could result in the restriction or suspension of my service duties within the church. I additionally understand that the church will report all allegations of physical and sexual abuse to the appropriate authorities. I also agree to have a background check done by SCREENING ONE and understand the results of the background check may influence my ability to serve the youth of the church. My signature acknowledges my understanding and agreement to this policy.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Nursery Application

This application is to be completed by all applicants who wish to be involved with serving in the nursery. Bridge of Hope believes strongly in forgiveness and helping those who have indiscretions in their past, but in an effort to protect the children who participate in our programs and to protect the volunteers who work with the children, this information must be collected. This information is **CONFIDENTIAL** and will only be used by the child abuse prevention team and the church council. With the exception of an investigation of abuse allegations where the information provided can help stop or prevent abuse within the church body.

### VOLUNTEER'S PERSONAL INFORMATION

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CELL NUMBER \_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_

HOW LONG HAVE YOU ATTENDED BRIDGE OF HOPE? \_\_\_\_\_ ARE YOU A MEMBER? \_\_\_\_\_

### VOLUNTEER BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Have you ever been accused, investigated, or pled guilty to child abuse or any type of sexual misconduct? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been arrested, convicted, or plead guilty to a crime? \_\_\_\_\_

Is there any fact, circumstance, or pattern involving your background that would make it inappropriate for you to serve with minors or would compromise the integrity of the church or your service? \_\_\_\_\_

Please explain any of the above in which you answered "yes" (use the back if needed) \_\_\_\_\_

### Volunteer's Agreement Statement

The information I have provided is correct to the best of my knowledge. I have read and understand Bridge of Hope Ministry's policy on abuse and supervision practices. I agree to its regulations and mandates and will adhere to them. I understand that past or current allegations or legal charges could result in the restriction or suspension of my service duties within the church. I additionally understand that the church will report all allegations of physical and sexual abuse to the appropriate authorities. My signature acknowledges my understanding and agreement to this policy.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_