

BCLR CHILD PROTECTION POLICY¹

Bible Church of Little Rock - October 2021

Dear Volunteer or Staff Member,

Thank you for serving at BCLR! This handbook provides a description of procedures and guidelines for workers. Our policies are intended to create a safe ministry environment for children, youth and you. The following procedures have been approved by BCLR leadership and will be diligently enforced. After carefully reading this policy manual, please sign and return the agreement form located on the last page.

Sincerely,

BCLR Leadership

¹ The most updated version may be found at <https://www.bclr.org>.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Table of Contents | 2 |
| BCLR KIDS Mission Statement | 4 |
| Student Ministries Mission Statement | 4 |
| Policy Parameters | 4 |
| Personnel Summary | 5 |
| Worker | 5 |
| Student Pastor | 5 |
| Children's Pastor | 5 |
| Nursery Director | 5 |
| Resource Manager | 5 |
| Training and Screening Procedures | 6 |
| Expectations | 7 |
| Of All Workers | 7 |
| For Classroom Settings (Expectations Continued) | 8 |
| The Two Worker Rule & The Rule of Three | 8 |
| Adult-to-Child Ratios | 8 |
| Guidelines for Visibility | 8 |
| Consequences for Policy Violations | 9 |
| Protective Rules and Safety Guidelines | 10 |
| Discipline | 10 |
| Physical Touch | 10 |
| Sickness and Wellness | 10 |
| Injury | 11 |
| Food and Drinks | 11 |
| Check-In Process | 11 |
| S.I.T. Board (Special Instructions Today) | 12 |
| Parental Contact and Involvement | 12 |
| Special Needs | 12 |
| Checkout Process | 12 |
| Restroom Procedures | 13 |
| Transportation Guidelines | 14 |
| Emergency Response Plan and Evacuation Procedures | 14 |
| Prevention Plan for Child Neglect and Abuse | 15 |

BCLR CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Reporting and Response Plan for Child Neglect and Abuse | 16 |
| Guidelines for Mandatory and Permissive Reporters | 16 |
| Church's Response to Allegations | 16 |
| Parameters for Confidentiality | 17 |
| Church Contact | 17 |
| Media Outlets and Coverage | 17 |
| How BCLR Handles Registered Sex Offenders | 17 |
| Duty-to-Warn Policy | 18 |
| Appendix A: Signs and Symptoms of Abuse | 19 |
| Symptoms of Abuse | 19 |
| Physical Abuse Signs and Symptoms | 19 |
| Sexual Abuse Signs and Symptoms | 19 |
| Emotional Abuse Signs and Symptoms | 19 |
| Neglect Signs and Symptoms | 20 |
| Parental Behavior | 20 |
| Appendix B: Arkansas State Guidelines for Mandatory and Permissive Reporters | 21 |
| Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement | 22 |
| Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement | 23 |
| Ministry Forms | 24 |
| Screening Application | 24 |
| Notice of Injury | 24 |
| Medical Consent | 24 |
| Transportation Consent | 24 |
| Photography Consent | 24 |

BCLR KIDS Mission Statement

It is the mission of BCLR Kids to assist² the parents of BCLR members in the evangelizing and discipleship of their grade school children. We seek to provide godly instruction and godly examples to the children of BCLR, infant to 6th grade, so that they might see Christ in His Word and in us!

Student Ministries Mission Statement

Student Ministries, in cooperation with adult and children's ministries, exists to glorify God by assisting parents in the calling of students to faith and repentance, and equipping them in the service of Jesus Christ.

Policy Parameters

This policy applies to ministry activities and programs which take place as part of the ministries of BCLR to minors, i.e. BCLR Kids (including Awana) and Student Ministries. This includes activities sanctioned by BCLR leadership which occur outside of the BCLR building, such as field trips, youth retreats or Awana campouts. This policy does not apply to all meetings whatsoever between BCLR members and their children or to any and all activities which take place in the BCLR building, but only the events, programs or activities that are planned and executed under the leadership of the Children's Pastor, the Student Ministries Pastor or the BCLR Board of Elders. Care Group child care is not subject to this policy.

² By assistance, we do not mean that we are attempting to either usurp or replace the God-given responsibility of parents to train and to raise their children ([Deut. 6:4-7](#)) in the "fear and admonition of the Lord" ([Eph. 6:2](#)). We are, however, committed to coming alongside parents to provide educational and other opportunities to point children to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Personnel Summary

Worker

A worker is anyone who has completed [the training and screening procedures](#)³ and serves within BCLR ministries to minors (children birth-18 years old). Workers include but are not limited to staff members, employees, elders, deacons, directors, managers, supervisors and volunteers.

Student Pastor

The student pastor is the elder charged with oversight of BCLR's Student Ministries. He has full oversight and responsibility for all BCLR ministries involving children 7th-12th grade.

Children's Pastor

The children's pastor is the elder charged with oversight of BCLR KIDS. He has full oversight and responsibility for all BCLR ministries involving children infant-6th grade.

Nursery Director

The Nursery Director is the supervisor charged with oversight of the BCLR nursery and operates under the direction of the Children's Pastor. The Nursery Director has oversight and responsibility for programs and activities in BCLR nursery.

Resource Manager

The Resource Manager is the supervisor charged with oversight of snacks and supplies related to BCLR KIDS and operates under the direction of the Children's Pastor. The Resource Manager has responsibility for assuring adequate inventory of snacks, supplies and equipment.

³ See page 6.

Training and Screening Procedures

A worker must be a BCLR member for at least 6 months to be eligible to serve in BCLR ministries to minors. All workers must complete **FIVE SAFETY STEPS** to be eligible to serve.⁴ The Student and Children's Ministries Pastors bear final authority for approval of each worker subject to the authority of the Board of Elders.

STEP ONE: Review and Affirm Policies & Procedures

STEP TWO: Complete a screening form, which includes the following elements:

1. Criminal Background Check Authorization (BCA)
2. Inquiries about sexual misconduct and/or criminal history (as allowed for by law) as well as traits or tendencies that pose a threat to vulnerable individuals
3. References that are checked by BCLR leadership
4. Personal interview at the discretion of BCLR leadership

STEP THREE: Complete Sexual Abuse Awareness Training⁵

STEP FOUR (Employees Only): Complete Employment Application

STEP FIVE: Receive approval from BCLR leadership (typically communicated from the church office)

⁴ BCLR workers currently serving in BCLR ministries to minors under previous training and screening standards may continue to serve. However, when their current screening form expires they must complete the safety steps outlined in this policy in order to continue to serve. BCLR leadership reserves the right to make exceptions to these requirements due to extenuating circumstances, e.g. the hiring of a new employee who has not completed 6 months as a member at BCLR.

⁵ Provided by a third party; paid for by BCLR; training must be completed every three years with records kept in office.

Expectations

Of All Workers

It is a fundamental expectation of all workers that they are actively pursuing lives devoted to God through Christ and by the power of the Spirit.⁶ The table below prohibits or controls certain behaviors and/or activities.

| 1:1 Interaction | Tobacco Use | Photographs | Nudity |
|---|---|---|---|
| Workers are prohibited from conducting unobserved one-to-one interactions with minors while in BCLR facilities or during BCLR activities. | Workers are prohibited from the use or possession of tobacco products while in the presence of minors or their parents in BCLR facilities or during BCLR activities. BCLR is a tobacco-free facility. | Workers are prohibited from distributing and/or publishing photographs of minors without express permission on record at BCLR from a parent/legal guardian. ⁷ | Workers are prohibited from showing nudity in the presence of minors. |
| Verbal Interactions | Intoxicants | Sexually Explicit Materials | Sexually Explicit Conversations |
| Workers are prohibited from speaking to minors in a way that is or could be construed by a reasonable observer to be harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning or humiliating. Workers are prohibited from using vulgar, profane language in the presence of minors. | Workers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drug while in the presence of minors or their parents in BCLR facilities or during BCLR activities. | Workers are prohibited from possessing or distributing any sexually explicit materials (magazines, cards, images, videos, films, etc.) while in the presence of minors or their parents in BCLR facilities or during BCLR activities. | Workers are prohibited from engaging in sexually explicit conversations while in the presence of minors or their parents in BCLR facilities or during BCLR activities, including details about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities, except insofar as they are directly related to relevant biblical teaching, the pursuit of purity, and/or the confession and repentance of sexual sin. |

⁶ c.f. Matt. 6:33 Rom. 6:10-11; Gal. 5:16-24; 2 Pet. 1:3-11; Heb. 12:14

⁷ We ask parents/legal guardians who visit ministries to assume that minors cannot be photographed unless they know otherwise.

For Classroom Settings (Expectations Continued)

The Two Worker Rule & The Rule of Three

The primary purpose of the Two Worker Rule is that no one worker should ever be alone with one minor during BCLR activities. The Two Worker Rule requires that two workers be present at every function and in each classroom, vehicle, or other enclosed area during all activities involving minors. Two workers must be present whenever supervising children or youth.

When the Two Worker Rule cannot be supported, the Rule of Three goes into effect. The Rule of Three requires three individuals to be present at every function and in each classroom, vehicle, or other enclosed area during all activities involving minors. At least one of the three must be a worker. A child must be at least five years old to count as one of the three.

Adult-to-Child Ratios

Any worker who finds themselves out of ratio must alert the Children's Pastor or Student Ministries Pastor who will make diligent efforts to find substitute workers to bring ratios into compliance with church policy. The following worker-to-child **minimum ratios** will be observed:

| Age | Workers | Minors |
|-------------------------|---------|--------|
| Infants (0-6 months) | 2 | 6 |
| Crawlers (6-12 months) | 2 | 6 |
| Toddlers (12-18 months) | 2 | 8 |
| Walkers (18-36 months) | 2 | 12 |
| 4-8 Years | 2 | 12 |
| 9-17 Years | 2 | 16 |

Guidelines for Visibility

Workers must ensure windowless doors remain open while any class is in session. Workers must ensure they remain visible to the rest of the class. An individual worker may not break off with smaller numbers of minors to any place that deviates from the regular pattern and/or class schedule. Any two minors together in an unseen or less-easily viewed area should be redirected to an area where they can be more easily seen.

Consequences for Policy Violations

Violations of this policy will be treated according to severity based on the following guidelines:

A policy violation may be considered moderate when a minor is put in no immediate danger, no impropriety is alleged or appears likely to have occurred and which was unintentional. Moderate violations will result in verbal and/or written warnings and reminders or retraining on policies.

Repeated moderate violations may result in removal from ministry to minors at BCLR for an indeterminate period of time provided that appropriate warnings and/or retraining have been offered and/or provided.

A policy violation may be treated as severe when any minor is put in immediate danger, impropriety appears likely and in which the policy violation was intentional. Severe violations will result in immediate removal of the worker from ministry to minors at BCLR pending any further investigations and counsel from relevant authorities as appropriate along with deliberations by the Board of Elders.

Protective Rules and Safety Guidelines

Discipline

Workers may not use any form of physical punishment. No form of physical punishment is acceptable. This includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, biting or any other physical force. Workers should report uncontrollable or unusual behavior to parents/guardians and the Children's Pastor or Student Ministries Pastor. Workers should use age-appropriate timeouts and other non-physical methods to correct misbehavior (e.g. the Awana 3-count rule). Workers should report to the Children's or Student Ministries Pastor when they are unsuccessful in correcting misbehavior and/or when they are uncertain of the best course of action.

Physical Touch

Workers must follow these guidelines:

- 1) Hugs, pats on the back and other forms of appropriate physical affection between workers and children are important for children's development and are generally suitable in the church setting.
- 2) Workers must report immediately any inappropriate behavior (e.g. inappropriate touching or displays of affection) or suspected abuse to an immediate supervisor or elder. See the guidelines for mandatory reporting for more information.
- 3) Workers must avoid the appearance of wrongdoing in physical contact.
- 4) Workers are prohibited from forcing physical contact, touch or affection on a reluctant minor. Workers must respect the minor's preference not to be touched.
- 5) Workers must practice due diligence in protecting minors from inappropriate or unwanted touch by others, including other minors.

Sickness and Wellness

If a child comes into the BCLR Kids with a known communicable disease, please notify a Nursery Director or the Children's Pastor immediately. We have a "well-child" nursery. For this reason, we ask that a child not be left who appears to be ill. If a child is found to be ill while in our care, notify the parents/legal guardians immediately. It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to keep their child at home if they have any of the following symptoms and/or illnesses:

- 1) Discolored (not clear) nasal discharge
- 2) A fever within the last 24 hours⁸
- 3) Unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or other signs of possible severe illness
- 4) Strep throat, until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun and until the child has been fever-free for 24 hours⁹

⁸ According to the Mayo Clinic, the following thermometer readings generally indicate a fever: rectal, ear or temporal artery reading of 100.4 F (38 C) or higher; oral reading of 100 F (37.8 C) or higher; armpit reading of 99 F (37.2 C) or higher.

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/first-aid/first-aid-fever/basics/art-20056685>

⁹ <https://www.cdc.gov/groupastrep/diseases-public/strep-throat.html#protect-yourself>

BCLR CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

- 5) Diarrhea
- 6) Vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition
- 7) Pink eye with white or yellow discharge, often with matted eyelids after sleep and eye pain or redness of the eyelids or skin surrounding the eye, until 36 hours after treatment has been initiated
- 8) Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted
- 9) Mumps, until nine days after onset of parotid gland swelling
- 10) Scabies, until after treatment has been completed
- 11) Head lice
- 12) Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD), including if any member of the household has it
- 13) Any open skin sore until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- 14) Persistent, uncontrollable biting

If a child is being treated with antibiotics, he/she should be on the drug for 24 hours prior to attending BCLR Kids. It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to inform the workers if a child has a continually clear runny nose or rash due to non-contagious allergies.

If a child has been exposed to someone with a communicable disease, it is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to seek appropriate medical counsel regarding if and when it is prudent to bring their child.

Workers should act appropriately where immediate action could mean life or death. **Parents of at-risk children must ensure that workers know where emergency medication is located and how to administer it correctly.** The Emergency Instructions Flip Books located in most rooms contain helpful information for many emergencies.

Injury

In the case of an injury during a BCLR activity, the worker most informed regarding the event should complete an Incident Report and turn it in to the church office.

Food and Drinks

Workers may feed infants according to parents'/guardians' specific instructions and at their request. Workers may serve snacks (e.g. crackers, Cheerios, Goldfish, etc.) to crawlers and toddlers. All food and drinks should be administered according to any instructions on the S.I.T Board (Special Instructions Today). **Parents are responsible for ensuring dietary restrictions and/or allergies are communicated to the workers, and workers are responsible for complying with them.**

Check-In Process

All BCLR Kids workers and children infant to 6th grade must have a KidCheck profile (<http://tinyurl.com/BCLRKidCheck>) and sign in with a 10-digit phone number when arriving to serve (see QR code at signup desk). Three tags are printed. One name tag is attached to the child's clothing.

BCLR CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Another name tag is placed on the room roster in a spiral notebook located at the entrance of the room (this allows workers to see special dietary instructions in case the child's name tag is destroyed or missing). A third name tag for the parent/guardian which serves as the matching security tag.

S.I.T. Board (Special Instructions Today)

Little Lambs, Fireflies, and Busy Bees all have an S.I.T. Board located just inside the room that is used to communicate special instructions for children in their care. This allows information to be seen by all workers that serve in that room for both the 1st and 2nd hour and may be updated weekly for each child.

Parental Contact and Involvement

Parents/legal guardians have an open invitation to observe all programs and activities in which their child is involved. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with their child's program will be required to complete the Church's volunteer application and screening process.

Special Needs

Children and youth with special needs and/or disabilities are welcome at BCLR. Parents/legal guardians are invited to schedule a consultation with the Children's or Student Ministries Pastor and/or other relevant leaders with the goal of accommodating the ministry to the child's physical, emotional and cognitive needs and/or disabilities. If the meeting determines that the ministry lacks adequate resources to serve the child(ren), the Pastor will make a good faith effort to obtain the resources needed to accommodate the child.

Parents may offer instruction to workers to change the diapers for children with special needs. Workers are prohibited from changing diapers of children ages 4 and above.

Checkout Process

The child's parents/guardians or a person whom they designate must present the child's matching KidCheck security tag in order to release the child from the workers' care. Any person designated by the parents/guardians must be at least 13 years old (even if they are the child's sibling). Children above kindergarten do not require a matching security tag unless requested of the Children's Pastor by a parent/guardian in written form.

In the event that the matching tag is misplaced, the parent or guardian may reprint the tag through KidCheck or show a valid I.D. In the event that this is not possible, a worker must contact the Children's Pastor or an elder. In the event that a worker is uncertain of the propriety of releasing a child, they should contact their immediate supervisor or the Children's Pastor before releasing the child.

BCLR incurs responsibility for the safety and welfare of minors whenever they have been entrusted to the care of BCLR workers. Workers must act to ensure the appropriate supervision and

BCLR CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

safety of minors in their charge. Non-workers and unassigned workers must remain outside the classroom unless an assigned worker requests assistance. Workers may only release care of minors to parents, legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians at the close of BCLR activities. It is presumed a person who drops off a child has authority to pick up that child.

Restroom Procedures

| Diapering... | Toilet Training... | Kindergarten to 6th Grade... |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">1) ...is restricted to female workers and/or the child's parent/guardian2) ...must be done in plain sight of other workers3) ... must be done on a changing table with the child attended at all times4) ...must be done according to Special Instructions Today (S.I.T.) Board located in each classroom. ("Seth Adams has medicine in the bag for rash.")5) ...must be done completely (i.e. child should be re-diapered and clothed) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">1) ...is restricted to female workers and/or the child's parent/guardian2) ... may not be forced3) ...must be done with the door partially open unless the door has windows4) ...must be done with an adult attending5) ...must be done according to Special Instructions Today (S.I.T.) Board located in each classroom (e.g. "Georgia can use the toilet, but she needs to be reminded – ask her if she needs to go.")6) ... may be assisted when necessary within eye- and earshot of another worker7) ... may account for accidents by comforting the child and completing the changing of diapers/underwear and clothing. <p><i>Extra clothing and diapers are available in the children's area to be used as needed.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">1) ...must be accompanied in accordance with the Two Worker Rule when possible and the Rule of Three when not2) ...must receive the minimum amount of assistance possible3) ...must be allowed the maximum privacy possible, with adult workers remaining just outside with the door propped open |

Transportation Guidelines

- 1) Workers are prohibited from riding alone with minors during BCLR activities.
- 2) Workers are prohibited from making unplanned stops in non-public places while transporting minors except in the case of emergency.
- 3) Workers are prohibited from using cell phones while transporting minors except in the case of emergency.
- 4) Workers must seek to avoid physical contact with children while in vehicles.
- 5) Workers must be at least 25 years old to transport minors for BCLR activities.

Emergency Response Plan and Evacuation Procedures

Each room in the BCLR building is equipped with the Emergency Instructions Flip Book developed by KidCheck.¹⁰ This easy-to-use Emergency Flip Book provides immediate access to emergency actions and instructions. Each Flip Book details step-by-step information detailing what to do for various emergency situations including: weather, fire, medical, disturbance, violence, evacuation, threats and more.

¹⁰ <https://www.kidcheck.com/best-practice/emergency-flip-book/>

Prevention Plan for Child Neglect and Abuse

A Safety Committee will be appointed to enable BCLR KIDS and Student Ministries to carry out appropriate ministry activities while safeguarding program participants against emotional, physical or sexual abuse. The Safety Committee will be comprised of an elder, the Children's Pastor, the Student Ministries Pastor, a member of the BCLR Security Team and any other member appointed by the Board of Elders. The Safety Committee will meet once per quarter or *ad hoc* as circumstances require.

The Safety Committee is charged with the following duties:

- 1) Apply existing BCLR policies and procedures related to children's safety and risk management issues.
- 2) Monitor all ministries involving minors for ongoing compliance with safety policies.
- 3) Make recommendations to the Board of Elders and/or the Board of Deacons regarding any emerging or foreseen safety issues.

In order to monitor ministries for ongoing compliance (see number 2 above), the Safety Committee will coordinate monitoring of workers serving in BCLR ministries to minors. The Safety Committee will appoint a sufficient number of supervisors from within the congregation to accomplish this task including regular (announced and unannounced) visits in each program to provide supervisors the opportunity to observe staff member and worker interaction with children. Each member of the Safety Committee and BCLR Security Team is automatically designated as a supervisor.

- 1) **Supervisors** will conduct unscheduled observations at least once each week for programs that occur weekly.
- 2) **The Children's Pastor and Student Ministries Pastor** will conduct written performance evaluations and personal interviews every six months for individuals in paid staff positions within their respective ministries.
- 3) **The Children's Pastor and Student Ministries Pastor** will periodically conduct informal verbal interviews to address strengths and weaknesses related to their ministry and conformity to BCLR policies.
- 4) **An Elder** will conduct an unscheduled observation of a Children's Ministry program at least once each quarter.
- 5) **An Elder** will meet with the Children's Pastor and Student Ministries Pastor at least once per quarter to discuss their ministries, including safety training and procedures.
- 6) **The Board of Elders** will meet with the Children's Pastor and Student Ministries Pastor annually to discuss their ministries, including safety training and procedures.
- 7) **The Children's Pastor** will conduct an unscheduled observation at least once each month for programs occurring weekly.

Reporting and Response Plan for Child Neglect and Abuse

Guidelines for Mandatory and Permissive Reporters

It is the responsibility of every staff member and volunteer at BCLR to act in the best interest of all children in every program. Any worker who observes any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse or neglect (physical, emotional, or sexual) must immediately report their observations to the Children's Pastor or the Student Ministries Pastor. In the event that this is not possible, they should report to any elder. Any worker may *personally* report a suspicion of abuse or neglect to appropriate law enforcement agencies as their conscience dictates or state law requires. See Appendix D below for the Arkansas State Guidelines for Reporting.

Church's Response to Allegations

Any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse or neglect will be reported to Child Protective Services or an appropriate agency in accordance with this policy and Arkansas state law. 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 involvement in ministry involving minors. This suspension will continue during any investigation by leadership, law enforcement or child protective agencies.

Any person found to have violated this policy may be prohibited from future participation as a worker in all activities and programming involving minors. If the person is an employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from BCLR and/or reporting to authorities in accordance with applicable state guidelines and/or laws. The BCLR Board of Elders will make final decisions regarding consequences for policy violations.

As soon as possible after an incident, the Board of Elders will appoint an elder to serve as the primary contact point between the victim(s) of abuse and the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders will respect the wishes/desires of the victim(s) and their families in making the appointment. This elder will coordinate with victims of abuse and their families to make available whatever counseling services they may need or require. He will maintain regular contact with the victim(s) and their families to ensure that the family is receiving the protection, guidance, counsel, comfort and shepherding that they need.

Workers are required to verbally report an incident to supervisory staff as soon as possible after an incident. Failure to report a policy violation is grounds for termination of an employee. Workers who fail to report a policy violation may be restricted from participation in any future activities involving minors at BCLR.

After receiving a report, the Children's Pastor or Student Ministries Pastor will obtain and record written detailed information regarding the incident. The Pastor will speak with people involved but will not seek out an interview with the potential victim. The Children's Pastor or Student Ministries Pastor will then notify the elder board.

Parameters for Confidentiality

Refer to Article XIV of the BCLR Bylaws for BCLR's policy on confidentiality.¹¹

Church Contact

The Children's Pastor and Student Ministries Pastor are the primary contacts for handling abuse allegations. However, any elder may serve as a contact.

Media Outlets and Coverage

The BCLR Board of Elders is charged with the responsibility for public communication regarding allegations or ongoing investigations of abuse. Depending on circumstances, the Board may appoint a representative to communicate to media outlets on behalf of the BCLR Board of Elders.

How BCLR Handles Registered Sex Offenders

BCLR recognizes and affirms the significance and value of sex offenders as men and women created in the image of God. BCLR also affirms the offender's need for the gospel and the power of God to save them from their sins and make them fellow saints and members of the body of Christ. BCLR leadership will act according to the following protocols for treating offenders appropriately while also protecting children from potential abuse:

1. In the event that a known sex offender attends a BCLR service or worship service, BCLR leadership will alert the BCLR Security Team to ensure that the offender's activities are monitored at all times.
2. The Security Team will ensure that the offender's access to and interaction with minors is restricted.
3. The Security Team will also ask the offender to leave the ministry premises in the event the team believes it prudent for the protection of minors. The Security Team will contact the officer on duty at BCLR (or local authorities) to escort the offender off BCLR premises if the situation escalates or the Security Team deems it necessary.
4. In the event that a known offender makes a credible profession of faith and expresses a desire to become a member at BCLR, BCLR leadership will not reject the request outright. Rather, the offender will be required to follow the same process as any other prospective member. However, the member is prohibited from serving in any capacity with BCLR KIDS, ROC Student Ministries or any other BCLR ministry to minors.

¹¹ <https://bclr.org/bylaws>

Duty-to-Warn Policy

BCLR leadership may become aware that a registered or credibly-accused offender is attending another church. If BCLR leadership believes there is a reasonable concern for the safety of the members of that church, BCLR leadership will make a good faith effort to contact that church's leadership and inform them of the suspicion and the grounds for it.

Appendix A: Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

The following signs and symptoms of child abuse are cited from the Mayo Clinic.¹² The use of this material does not constitute wholesale endorsement by BCLR of the Mayo Clinic or their articles aside from what is cited below.

Symptoms of Abuse

A child who is being abused may feel guilty, ashamed or confused. He or she may be afraid to tell anyone about the abuse, especially if the abuser is a parent, other relative or family friend. That's why it's vital to watch for red flags, such as:

- Withdrawal from friends or usual activities
- Changes in behavior — such as aggression, anger, hostility or hyperactivity — or changes in school performance
- Depression, anxiety or unusual fears, or a sudden loss of self-confidence
- An apparent lack of supervision
- Frequent absences from school
- Reluctance to leave school activities, as if he or she doesn't want to go home
- Attempts at running away
- Rebellious or defiant behavior
- Self-harm or attempts at suicide

Specific signs and symptoms depend on the type of abuse and can vary. Keep in mind that warning signs are just that — warning signs. The presence of warning signs doesn't necessarily mean that a child is being abused.

Physical Abuse Signs and Symptoms

- Unexplained injuries, such as bruises, fractures or burns
- Injuries that don't match the given explanation

Sexual Abuse Signs and Symptoms

- Sexual behavior or knowledge that's inappropriate for the child's age
- Pregnancy or a sexually-transmitted infection
- Blood in the child's underwear
- Statements that he or she was sexually abused
- Inappropriate sexual contact with other children

Emotional Abuse Signs and Symptoms

- Delayed or inappropriate emotional development
- Loss of self-confidence or self-esteem
- Social withdrawal or a loss of interest or enthusiasm

¹² <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/child-abuse/symptoms-causes/syc-20370864?p=1>

BCLR CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

- Depression
- Avoidance of certain situations, such as refusing to go to school or ride the bus
- Desperately seeks affection
- A decrease in school performance or loss of interest in school
- Loss of previously acquired developmental skills

Neglect Signs and Symptoms

- Poor growth or weight gain or being overweight
- Poor hygiene
- Lack of clothing or supplies to meet physical needs
- Taking food or money without permission
- Hiding food for later
- Poor record of school attendance
- Lack of appropriate attention for medical, dental or psychological problems or lack of necessary follow-up care

Parental Behavior

Sometimes a parent's demeanor or behavior sends red flags about child abuse. Warning signs include a parent who:

- Shows little concern for the child
- Appears unable to recognize physical or emotional distress in the child
- Blames the child for the problems
- Consistently belittles or berates the child, and describes the child with negative terms, such as "worthless" or "evil"
- Expects the child to provide him or her with attention and care and seems jealous of other family members getting attention from the child
- Uses harsh physical discipline
- Demands an inappropriate level of physical or academic performance
- Severely limits the child's contact with others
- Offers conflicting or unconvincing explanations for a child's injuries or no explanation at all

Appendix B: Arkansas State Guidelines for Mandatory and Permissive Reporters

A *professional* who has cause to believe that a child has been *or may be* abused or neglected must make a report no later than 48 hours after the professional first suspects that the child has been or may be abused or neglected, and may not delegate to or rely on another person to make the report.

Under Arkansas law, a “professional” includes any individual who is licensed or certified by the state, and who, in the normal course of his or her duties for which licensure is required, has direct contact with children.

Professionals include:

- Teachers or daycare employees,
- Nurses, doctors, or employees of a clinic or health-care facility that provides reproductive services,
- Juvenile probation officers or juvenile detention or correctional officers.

In addition, a worker must make a report if he or she has cause to believe that an *adult* was a victim of abuse or neglect as a child, and the worker determines in good faith that disclosure of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of *another child*.

The person making a report must identify, if known:

- The name and address of the child,
- The name and address of the person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child, and
- Any other pertinent information concerning the alleged abuse or neglect

Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement

I have received and read a copy of BCLR's Children's Ministry Policies and Procedures Manual and understand the importance of the matters set forth within the manual. I agree to follow and abide by these guidelines during my service at BCLR.

Further, I understand that the manual may be modified at any time, and that any guidelines may be amended, revised, or eliminated at any time by BCLR.

I also acknowledge that I have reviewed and agree to fulfill the duties listed in the manual. While, ideally, I will serve in this ministry for the agreed term, I understand that I may choose to end this relationship at any time. If possible, I will provide two weeks' notice to my supervisor.

I further acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this manual in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between BCLR and me. If I am applying as a volunteer, I acknowledge and agree that I will receive no compensation for hours worked.

Finally, I understand that it is my responsibility to review new guidelines that are created and distributed, as well as manual guidelines that are changed or deleted.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the BCLR Policies and Procedures Manual.

Worker's name (please print)

Worker's signature

Date: _____

[This page is to remain attached to BCLR Children's Ministry Policies.]

Statement of Acknowledgment and Agreement

I have received and read a copy of BCLR's Children's Ministry Policies and Procedures Manual and understand the importance of the matters set forth within the manual. I agree to follow and abide by these guidelines during my service at BCLR.

Further, I understand that the manual may be modified at any time, and that any guidelines may be amended, revised, or eliminated at any time by BCLR.

I also acknowledge that I have reviewed and agree to fulfill the duties listed in the manual. While, ideally, I will serve in this ministry for the agreed term, I understand that I may choose to end this relationship at any time. If possible, I will provide two weeks' notice to my supervisor.

I further acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this manual in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between BCLR and me. If I am applying as a volunteer, I acknowledge and agree that I will receive no compensation for hours worked.

Finally, I understand that it is my responsibility to review new guidelines that are created and distributed, as well as manual guidelines that are changed or deleted.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the BCLR Policies and Procedures Manual.

Worker's name (please print)

Worker's signature

Date: _____

[This page is to be signed, detached and delivered to the church office.]

Ministry Forms

Screening Application

Incident Report

Medical Consent

Photography Consent