



## Child Abuse & Neglect Training Checklist

- **What do I do if I suspect that a child has been physically, emotionally, or sexually abused?** *Report Immediately!*
  - In the case of suspected parental abuse, staff and servants will immediately make a report to Child Protective Services (502-595-4550) and report concerns to the Campus Kids Director or to one of Sojourn’s pastors.
  - It is not the responsibility of the reporting person or the staff to substantiate any allegations or suspicions. Rather, we are responsible as a church community to comply with the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) and cooperate fully with Child Protection Services and the law enforcement officials in our community. At all times in such a process confidentiality will be upheld. **DO NOT DISCUSS WITH OTHER PARENTS OR CHILDCARE WORKERS.**
  - If a child is disclosing that a parent or another adult is causing harm, **DO NOT** talk with the parent or that adult about this. This is where much discernment about the situation is needed. Talking to the parent could result in additional abuse, shame, etc. Contact your Campus Kids Director or a Sojourn pastor immediately.
- **Who is considered a “mandatory reporter” of child abuse and neglect?**
  - For Kentucky, any person who knows or has reasonable cause to believe that a child is neglected or abused shall immediately cause an oral or written report to be made (KRS 620.030, section 1-3)
  - For Indiana, an individual who has reason to believe that a child is a victim of child abuse or neglect shall make a report both within the agency (to church authorities) and to the department of child services (IN Code 31-3-5).
  - This includes but is not limited to *teachers*, school personnel, or *child-caring personnel*. This makes *anyone* working with children at Sojourn a mandatory reporter.
- **How do I know if something is reportable or not?** CAPTA (The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act) mandates “minimum definitions” for child abuse and sexual abuse

**Child abuse or neglect** is any recent act or failure to act *resulting* in imminent risk or serious harm, death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation of a *child* (usually a person under the age of 18, but a younger age may be specified by CPS in cases not involving sexual abuse) by a parent or caretaker who is responsible for the child’s welfare.

**Sexual abuse** is defined as:

- Employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or

coercion of any child to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct or any simulation of such conduct for the purpose of producing visual depiction of such conduct; or

- Rape, and in cases of caretaker or inter-familial

relationships, statutory rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of children, or incest with children.

There are many signs of child abuse. Any one sign may not mean anything, but if there are a number of signs, or if they occur frequently, you may suspect maltreatment. Some signs are...

### Physical

- Unusual bruises, welts, burns, fractures, or bite marks
- Frequent injuries, always explained as accidental
- Wears concealing clothing to hide injuries
- Child seems frightened
- Child seeks affection from any adult
- Unpleasant, hard to get along with, demanding, often does not obey.

### Emotional

- Apathetic, depressed, withdrawn, passive
- Seems overly anxious when faced with new situations, people.
- Disorganized, distrustful, or rigidly compulsive.
- Takes on adult or parent roles and responsibilities.
- Throws tantrums, seems impulsive, defiant, antisocial, aggressive, self-destructive
- Fearful, hyper-alert, lack of creativity and exploration.

### Sexual

- Has torn, stained, or bloody underclothing.
- Experiences pain or itching in genital areas
- Has an STD or venereal disease
- Appears withdrawn or engages in fantasy or baby-like behavior.
- Has a poor relationship with other children.
- Is unwilling to participate with other children.
- States that he or she has been sexually assaulted
- Acts like an adult, not a child.

\*\*The information above is from the Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information, Department of Health and Human Services, P.O. Box 1182, Washington, D.C. 20013, Telephone: 301-251-5157. A more detailed list of definitions from the Child Welfare Information Gateway and Home of the Innocents is available in the SojournKids office. If you suspect abuse or neglect, ask more specific questions by contacting your Campus Kids Director of a Sojourn pastor immediately.

- **“Wouldn’t I know a predator if I saw one?”**

### A. False Assumptions that We Make.

- We assume it will happen to someone else.
- We assume we are safe.
- We assume we can recognize them (i.e., they will be “monsters” and not like us).
- We assume they exist only in certain social and economic

demographics.

**B. Profile of a Predator**--Abusers are often the people that you'd least expect.

- Over 80% of the time, the abuser is someone known to the victim. Most abuse takes place within the context of an on-going relationship. There are more persuasion predators (sharks) than power predators (bear). They live a double-life, and they groom the child for abuse before acting. They seek opportunities to have easy access to children (example, targeting single mothers). Some predators deliberately target churches. These predators count on their victims giving no disclosure.
- The usual offender is between the ages of 20-30 years. 20% of sex offenders begin their activity before the age of 18. Most are men, but there are some women. Predators are often married and have children. They come from every economic and social demographic

□ **What happens if a child touches me**

**inappropriately?** *First, think about how you would respond before this occurs.*

- Remain calm. Ask yourself if this was accidental or on purpose.
- Redirect appropriately (e.g. "Sarah, please keep your hands to yourself")
- Take the child aside and explain good touch / bad touch if given the opportunity ("We do not touch areas covered by a swimming suit."). Take into account the age of the child you are working with. You should be able to talk about inappropriate touching with children ages 3 and older.
- For abused children, inappropriate touching may seem "normal." Or, the behavior may be to gain attention or see how the adult will respond.
- Notify your Campus Kids director or a Sojourn pastor immediately about purposeful and inappropriate touching.

□ **How can I best minister to a child that has been abused or neglected?** *You are an important part of the healing / redemptive process for a child who may have been abused or neglected. It is important that you...*

- Pray for the children you are working with that they will be safe, secure, and loved.
- Speak to children with integrity. Children will often feel safe in a church setting, and they may open up to you because they think that you are someone they can trust. If a child says that they want to tell you something only if you promise not to tell anyone else, you should respond, "I want to hear what you have to say, but I can't promise that I can keep a secret." This way, if they disclose any abuse or neglect, you can report without betraying their trust.
- Remember that children don't always tell the truth, but it is our responsibility to listen and report what was stated. You may end up saving the life of a child!
- If any child has been abused, and we DO know about it and action IS being taken, there are a few things to remember when working with this child: Have lots of patience and understanding; Report to the parents/guardians each time the child brings up the assault; Show lots of love and care for the child.

□ **What additional care is required for a child that is in foster care?**

- When a child is in foster care, their legal guardian is the CHFS (Cabinet for Health and Family Services) so often the biological family or the foster family does not have custody and cannot pick up a child. Be aware of these circumstances.
- When a child is in foster care, there is also a need for added privacy. No photos should be taken of these children. Names of these kids should not be talked about outside of church. Moreover, staff and servants should not solicit information about whether foster parents plan to adopt, why the children are in care or where their birth parents live.

□ **How can I guard myself from accusation?** *While appropriate physical contact with children can be an effective means of aiding in communication, redirecting attention, calming restlessness, or of showing godly love and care, it can also be easily misinterpreted. Here are a few simple rules to abide by related to physical touch to help protect yourself from accusation—whether you are serving in children's ministry, an event, or are just interacting with kids in community:*

- Always remain in open sight of other adults.
- Appropriate physical contact will vary according to the age of the child. What is appropriate for nursery children (holding, rocking, sitting in laps, diapering, assisting in the potty, etc.) will not be appropriate for grade school children.
- At SojournKIDS, our policy is that only females may change diapers. Only females will take children to the bathroom and/or assist in the potty. We do not change the diapers of children age 5+.
- Sitting on laps is only appropriate for ages 0 through pre-K, but it is not appropriate for older children. It is not appropriate for a man to pick up or hold a child who is older than pre-K.
- In some situations, a man will need to limit physical contact more than a woman in the same situation, especially when working with older children.
- All caregivers should refrain from the following activities: roughhousing, wrestling, or giving shoulder or piggyback rides to children. Physical contact in group activities such as ultimate Frisbee, freeze tag, touch football, etc., is reasonable and understandable, but be above reproach in all relationships. Generally speaking, these types of activities should be avoided in a community group setting as well—particularly if a child's parents are not present or within sight range.
- Use care and discernment when hugging a child. Brief side-hugs when greeting or comforting a child are generally appropriate. Prolonged, frequent, or frontal hugs are not appropriate. In older classes, servants should not initiate hugs, particularly towards children of the opposite sex. If an older child initiates a hug, redirect them to more appropriate contact such as a side hug or gentle "high-five."
- Only touch children in "safe" areas and for brief times, with no rubbing or massaging. "Safe" areas generally include hands, arms, shoulders, upper back, or gentle pats on the top of a child's head. Never touch a child on or near any region that is considered private or personal (on any part of their body that a swimsuit covers) unless changing diapers or assisting nursery children in the potty.
- Never touch a child out of frustration or anger. Physical discipline is not an appropriate means of correcting someone else's child.