

Child & Youth Protection Policy

For Children and Youth Workers

Paul M Barner Ministries

& all its subsidiaries

Davao City, Philippines

(63) 82-234-4000

This policy has been approved by the leadership of said ministry and is in effect over all the ministries of the institution to minor children and youth.

It was revised and adopted on April 14, 2023

This policy will be implemented and administered by the Pastors, leaders and Elders in conjunction with the Directors of the Children's and Youth Ministries

Why a Child/ Youth Protection Policy?

Ministry to children and youth is vitally important to us here at Paul M Barner Ministires. Jesus said, *"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."* Matt 19:14 NIV. Jesus further clarifies his intent when he said, *"It is better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea, than that he would cause one of these little ones to stumble"* Luke 17:2 NASB. As a body of believers, we must take this area of ministry very seriously.

Today, child abuse and child abuse accusations are occurring daily. Therefore, it is important that PMBMI takes steps to protect the children to whom we minister and to protect our workers from false accusations. It is naive and irresponsible to believe *"it could never happen here"*.

It is our goal to enact a policy and procedures that will help safeguard our continued ministry to our young people of all ages. Our desire is to protect:

1. our children.. ...by having an approval process and training requirements for potential workers, thereby minimizing the possibility of future problems.
2. our workers... by attempting to shield them from false accusations, and keeping them from being placed in compromising situations.
3. our ministries... by maintaining a high standard of education and loving care, so that our integrity and testimony remain unblemished.

Church Position Statement

PMBMI, FAF, FHF & BCA desire to provide a friendly and safe nurturing environment where families can feel comfortable in allowing their children and youth to receive spiritual training and guidance. The ministries take very seriously their responsibility to safeguard children and youth from abusive situations. This is why PMBMI denounces and deplors any and all forms of child abuse including sexual and physical abuse. This is also why all new church workers are required to complete a church worker's application (which includes specific questions regarding sexual abuse), to submit references, and to undergo training for child abuse awareness.

The church is implementing these procedures to maximize child and youth protection. PMBMI intends to cooperate fully with all civil and legal authorities to investigate any and all allegations of misconduct on the pan of its workers, paid or volunteer.

As a body of believers, we must work together to provide educational programs to instruct adults and children regarding the nature and impact of child trafficking and abuse. Victims of abuse need love, encouragement, and support. This extends not only to current victims, but also to adult survivors of childhood abuse.

Definition of Child Abuse

Child abuse is defined as any verbal or physical abuse or exploitation of a minor, including the "grooming" or psychologically/ subconsciously preparing of a minor for these abuses. Signs of potential "grooming" often include giving unsolicited gifts (specifically money, cell phones or candy), requesting to be alone with a/select specific child/ren , or nonculturally-accepted spontaneous and explosive antics. It also includes serious physical injury,

which is not explained by medical history as being accidental. Abuse includes non-physical contact such as sexually explicit verbal comments or innuendoes, displaying of pornographic images, obscene messages, exhibitionism, or allowing children to witness sexual activity.

Examples of verbal abuse include excessive yelling, berating, ridicule, or verbal assault intentionally directed at a child. Examples of physical abuse include corporal punishment (other than reasonable, controlled punishment by a parent of their own child), striking, shoving, or other use of excessive physical force.

Sexual abuse of minors (less than 18 years old) is any contact or interaction between a minor and an adult in which the minor is being used for the sexual stimulation of the adult or another person.

Worker Policies

- 1 . Workers should always conduct themselves in a Godly manner, being an example of obedience, respect, and honesty.
2. Workers and helpers must never be alone in private with children or youth without additional adult presence. Classrooms should be equipped with windows to make them open to observation. If the classroom or counseling room door does not have a window, the door must always remain open while occupied.
3. Individual contacts of workers with children or youth shall be with express parental permission only.
4. Workers are not to use corporal punishment. Limited physical restraint may be used to protect the child or others. If disciplinary action is required, the child's parent(s) should be contacted.
5. Workers will not be involved in any of the following activities with children or youth: extended hugging, kissing, any inappropriate touching, being alone (see above), or sitting a child / youth on the lap. (Children 5 years old & under permissible.)
6. When staffing allows, an adult, who shall wait outside the door, should accompany children using the comfort room (CR). If the adult worker is required to enter the CR, the door(s) shall remain open (propped).
7. Parents are responsible for placing the child in the direct care of the teacher or helper for the child's age group. At the close of sessions, children will only be released with proper parent/guardian identification.
8. Parents are not to leave children unattended in the church or on church grounds. A child should at all times be either with an approved teacher OR the parent. Anything else should be avoided. This includes meetings and activities that occur in the church building outside normal services.
9. Diaper changing should always take place in such a way that other nursery workers could easily see the child that is being changed. Husbands and wives may work together in the same room with the approval of the nursery coordinator.
10. A child who, in the teacher's opinion, is in a contagious and/or unhealthy state, should not be received into the classroom. Signs include coughing, sneezing, runny nose and/ or eyes, fever,

vomiting, or diarrhea. Allergies do not preclude a child from participating in activities. Likewise, teachers owe it to the students to refrain from teaching when the teacher feels he/she is in an unhealthy, contagious state.

11. Emergency Workers are not to give or apply any medications to children except with express parental/guardian permission in special situations. (Such permission shall be in writing in advance or with two witnesses if by phone.) In a life-threatening situation, workers shall call 911 and should provide life-sustaining intervention as able, under the provisions of the law. Simple First Aid such as cleaning and bandaging minor wounds may be done until a parent or the family physician can provide more complete care. First Aid boxes will be kept on-hand and all workers are to be familiar with the locations. Supervisors should check the contents quarterly. In any medical situation requiring care, parents or the guardian-on-record shall be notified as soon as possible.
12. Parties and Field Trips — Always have at least two pre-approved nonrelated adults present at all times at these activities. Secure a signed parental release statement from each parent if the ministry is responsible for transporting children to these activities.
13. Parental permission slips for off-church activities may be signed at the beginning of the year as part of the registration process for a particular class or club. Teachers and Leaders are required to inform parents at least 24 hours in advance before any such special off-site event takes place.
14. Designated personnel shall make random visits to classrooms or ministry-sponsored activities to monitor for policy compliance.
15. All workers must follow the reporting guidelines as given below.

Reporting Procedures

All workers **MUST** report known or reasonably suspected cases of physical or sexual abuse, or sexually inappropriate or suspicious behavior, including, but not limited to, “grooming”. They are also to report when these policies and procedures have been violated.

Workers are to notify their Supervisor, an Elder, or a Pastor immediately:

1. When these policies and / or procedures have been violated.
2. When suspicious behavior of workers is observed, such as:
 - Inappropriate touching
 - Inappropriate time spent one-on-one
 - Inappropriate language is used
3. When physical signs or suspicious behavior symptomatic of sexual or physical abuse is observed in a child or youth.

Such physical signs include:

Lacerations	Bruises
Nightmares	Unusual fears
Damaged underclothing	STDs
Difficulty urinating. Discomfort when sitting, Irritation, Pain, or Injury to the genital area	

Such behavioral signs include:

- Undue anxiety when approaching:
the ministry buildings, nursery, or classroom
- Nervous, fearful, or hostile behavior towards adults
(specific or general)
- "Acting Out" of sexual behavior
- Withdrawal from ministry activities or friends

If a Supervisor is first notified, he/she shall then inform a Pastor or Elder.

If an Elder is first notified, he shall notify a Pastor and the Supervisor if appropriate.

If a Pastor is first notified, he shall notify another lay Elder & the Supervisor if appropriate.

The Pastor, Elder, and Supervisor (where appropriate) are responsible to immediately investigate the situation and ascertain the facts with appropriate discretion and discernment.

When an accusation or report gives initial evidence as legitimate, those who are investigating shall take appropriate action as below.

Parents shall be notified as soon as possible, (except where legitimate suspicion of in-home abuse suggests investigation by the authorities first.)

When the matter involves only a violation of procedure or policy, the correction shall be handled in-house. During the investigation of a possible policy violation, the individual involved shall be given the opportunity to enlist an advocate to support them in the matter.

When the matter involves potential abuse outside the ministry but discovered within the ministry, proper reporting procedures to child protection authorities shall be followed.

When the matter involves potential abuse within the context of our ministry, all appropriate measures to uncover the truth, deal with the offender, and protect and aid the victim (s): both potential and actual, will be taken.

The church will notify law enforcement authorities when reasonable suspicion of criminal wrongdoing exists and will cooperate fully with any ensuing investigation and litigation.

In all cases involving possible criminal acts or potential civil liability, the Pastors, Administrators, Faculty, Staff, and Elders must all be informed, and the required paperwork must be initiated.

The Ministry Position Statement on Child Protection must be available for release in the event an incident becomes public. The Lead Pastor, or an Elder approved designee, will be the spokesman for the ministry in such cases.

Affirmations Required

Background Check Authorization: PMBMI and/or its designated agents and representatives are authorized to conduct a comprehensive review of an applicant's background. The scope of the background check may include, but is not limited to, the following areas: Verification of current and

previous residences; character references; criminal history records from any criminal justice agency in any or all international, federal, state, county jurisdictions; driver history records to include traffic citations and license status; and any other public records or to conduct interviews with third parties relative to personal character and moral reputation.

Agreement must be made to observe all ministry policies regarding working with children or youth, and be bound by the policies of PMBMI and to refrain from unscriptural conduct in the performance of services on behalf of the ministry.

Special ruling for foreign visitors

When/if foreigners visit this ministry, be it short term or otherwise, they are expected to abide by the rules listed herein, also including any culturally-exclusive norms present here (in the host country) that are not present in the sending country.

Should they veer from them, the ministry has full right to contact lawyers, police and/or immigration officials and/or to ban the individual/s from ever re-entering the country of the Philippines. The ministry also has the right, if needed, to apply for a TRO (Temporary Restraining Order) to protect the children in this ministry.