

# First Southern Baptist Church of Avondale

## Supervision of Children and Youth

*Approved by the Church in Business Meeting, April 30, 2008*

*Modified by the church in business meeting on April 25, 2018 with items in italic.*

### Supervision of Children and Youth Activities

We take very seriously the responsibility of adequately leading, supervising, and providing for the safety of children and youth at all of our functions and activities. Here are our basic guidelines.

1. Parents, guardians, and approved workers are always welcome at all of our children and youth classes, activities, and functions. However, for the safety of our children, we will not allow the participation of other persons.
2. All teachers, workers, and leaders at children and youth functions must have a completed and approved workers application on file with the church. Parents and guardians do not count toward our supervision ratios and are to be observers only unless they have agreed to serve as approved workers and they have an application on file.
3. We will plan and conduct our supervision in such a way that there are always at least two *unrelated* approved workers in every class, room, or vehicle with the children and youth in our care. A youth volunteer (age 14 and up) may supervise children as an approved worker of children under the ages of 10 years with one other adult (not related), except in cases of transportation and off campus events. Youth volunteers must have completed the approved worker application on file with the church.
4. Our minimum ratios for functions which are held at church and which do not require any transportation are one approved worker for every three or fewer infants (birth up to 12 months), one approved worker for every five or fewer toddlers (12 months to 24 months), one approved worker for every seven or fewer preschoolers, one approved worker for every ten or fewer children (K-6<sup>th</sup> grades), and one approved worker for every 12 or fewer youth (7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades).
5. Our minimum ratios for functions which require transportation, or which are held away from the church are one adult for every four or fewer preschoolers, one adult for every six or fewer children, and one adult for every eight or fewer youth.
6. Group leaders are responsible for giving approved workers their specific responsibilities before events and activities, for sharing with them the content of these guidelines, and for reminding them that they are expected to lead in a mature, ethical, legal, and Christian manner at all times. An approved worker who fails to meet our standards or who will not follow our guidelines will not be allowed to continue their supervision and will be asked to leave.

7. Any approved worker who participates in an illegal activity (including, but not limited to, activities such as providing minors with drugs or alcohol, child abuse, reckless driving, participation in sexual activity of any kind with a minor, etc.) will be immediately referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency for investigation and/or prosecution.
8. Our approved workers are expected to give clear guidelines to the children and youth in our care as to appropriate activities and limitations. Children and youth who cannot live within our guidelines and expectations or who come onto our premises and refuse to go to an appropriate class, activity, or service, will be asked to leave or will be sent home at the parent's expense.
9. We will not tolerate any kind of child abuse or any kind of sexual activity. In order to enforce this, we have adopted the following policies whenever minors are involved:
  - A. We have an intense screening and approval process for workers, and no one is allowed to work with children until they have been approved through this process.
  - B. We do not allow one-on-one counseling with a minor. Females needing counseling need to be counseled by a female with another adult present. Males needing counseling need to be counseled by a male with another adult present.
  - C. *We do not allow one-on-one texting, emailing, or social media messaging with a minor. Any texting, emailing, or social media messaging will include another approved and unrelated adult worker.*
  - C. There should never be a situation at an event or during church-sponsored transportation in which minors are left alone or in which there is only one approved worker with minors. Two approved workers should always be present.
  - D. When an event requires an overnight stay or sleeping arrangements, there should always be two adults of the same sex as the minors present in every room. Males and females must sleep in separate rooms.
  - E. We do not tolerate any kind of sexual activity between children or youth at any church related event or activity. A violation of this rule leads to an immediate and automatic expulsion from the event, notification of parents, and restriction from future events.
  - F. If, despite these policies and our best efforts, any kind of sexual contact between an approved worker and a youth occurs, it will be referred immediately to the authorities, as well as to the group leader and the senior pastor.
  - G. If in the course of working, counseling, or observing a minor, we believe that there is a reasonable belief that a minor has been the victim of sexual or physical abuse, it will be reported immediately to the authorities for proper action.

## **Transportation of Children and Youth**

Occasionally, we provide transportation as part of a children's or youth activity. When we do so, we will follow the above guidelines, as well as the transportation related guidelines below.

1. Everyone will wear safety belts at all times, unless the vehicle is a school bus that is not equipped with seat belts.

2. Speed limits and all traffic laws will be followed.
3. All vehicles will be checked before leaving to certify that tires, brakes, fluids, seat belts, and other safety systems are in proper working order.
4. All drivers must have an approved worker application on file, must have a copy of their driver's license on file with the office, must have no more than one traffic ticket within the last three years, and must be between the ages of 25 and 70.
5. The activity will be planned in such a way that rested drivers are always available. We do not allow drivers to drive late into the night after supervising children all day, nor do we allow a driver to drive more than twelve hours in any twenty-four hour period. The safety of the children in our care takes priority over other scheduling needs.
6. The group leader will turn in an adequate written transportation plan to the church before leaving on any trip involving children or youth. The plan should show a primary concern for the safety of those in our care, and should indicate that these guidelines as well as all relevant safety, legal, and supervision issues have been adequately prepared for. The written plan should include a description of the event, anticipated driving times and route, the names of drivers and other adults, anticipated rest and meal stops, emergency contact numbers, an anticipated return time, and a copy of the permission slips for all minors.
7. Transportation and supervision will be arranged in such a way that we never have one counselor alone in a vehicle with only one child or youth.
8. Any accidents, injuries, traffic tickets, or violations of these guidelines must be reported to the senior pastor immediately.

I have read these guidelines and I have attended a training session on their implementation. I agree to abide by these policies in all classes, events, and activities of the First Southern Baptist Church of Avondale. *I have been given a signed copy of these guidelines for my own use.*

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Name (Please Print)

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Signature

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Date

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Training Session Leader / Signature and Date