



# Code of Conduct for Child Protection

Cadence International ministers to military personnel and their families in the United States and around the world. These ministries take place in hospitality houses, military chapels, retreat facilities, homes, churches, and other venues. Cadence staff, military, and civilian **adults** and **children** participate in these ministries. In all of these locations and events, it is Cadence's intent to provide a safe and loving environment where children are valued, protected, and encouraged in their faith.

Child protection is everyone's responsibility. Having a common set of expectations will serve to inform parents, adults, and children regarding behaviors which are either to be practiced or avoided in order to protect children in our ministries from **abuse**. This code of conduct also seeks to protect adults caring for children from false or invalid reports of inappropriate behavior.

The most effective way to prevent abuse of children is to be vigilant. Within our ministries and facilities, these safeguards will reduce the risk of inappropriate behavior and demonstrate wisdom in healthy interactions with children. This Code of Conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following expectations of **staff** and **workers**.

## ACCOUNTABILITY:

1. All staff and child care workers will be required to complete Child Protection Training and maintain a current training certificate.
2. Staff will complete an approved background check. This background check will be kept on file and valid for five years, unless otherwise necessary.
3. Hired and volunteer child care workers will complete an application and submit an approved background check (if 18 or older) before we place children under their supervision. This background check will be kept on file and valid for three years, unless otherwise necessary.

Throughout this document, the term **adult** refers to anyone 18 years of age or older.

Throughout this document, the term **children** or **child** refers to anyone under the age of 18.

Throughout this document, the term **staff** refers to Cadence International employees.

Throughout this document, the term **workers** or **child care workers** refers to hired child care individuals and volunteers.

Throughout this document we are operating under the following definitions of **abuse**:

Child abuse is any action by another person—adult or child—that causes considerable harm to a child. It is any action, or lack of action, that significantly endangers or impairs a child's physical, mental, or emotional health and development.

**Sexual abuse** may include but is not limited to

- **Verbal:** remarks which include sexual comments or threats, solicitation, sexually explicit language—whether in person, on the telephone, via text messaging, or on the Internet.
- **Visual:** showing of sexually suggestive material, inappropriate staring, misuse of photographs of children, etc.
- **Inappropriate physical touching:** mainly (but not exclusively) for the purpose of sexual gratification, ranging from fondling or kissing to sexual intercourse.

**Physical abuse** is any act that results in a non-accidental physical injury. It includes unreasonably severe corporal punishment or excessive spanking done in anger, as well as slapping, punching, beating, kicking, biting, shaking, burning, holding under water, pulling hair, or holding against one's will. Physical injury does not include the transient redness that sometimes results from acceptable and agreed upon parental forms of corporal punishment.

**Emotional abuse** involves patterns of belittling, threatening, scaring, humiliating, discriminating, or blaming a child.

**Neglect** is the failure to provide what is needed for the development of a child in all spheres—health, education, emotions, nutrition, shelter, and safe living conditions—in the context of resources reasonably available to the family or caretakers.

4. All staff and workers are expected to interact with children in a mature, safe, caring, and responsible manner with a high level of accountability.
5. Staff and workers are responsible for giving and accepting feedback from others in order to maintain a high level of professional integrity in relating to children.
6. Permission slips will be on file for each child participating in all off-site events or events in which a parent is not present. This may be included in one form that covers all such events, with or without an expiration date.
7. Any accident or suspected child abuse occurring at a Cadence facility or event will be immediately reported to the parent and the appropriate Cadence staff. Reports are made using the Report of Harm to a Child form and submitting it to [Child.Protection@Cadence.org](mailto:Child.Protection@Cadence.org) or using the online form at [Cadence.org/ReportHarm](https://Cadence.org/ReportHarm).

#### **VISIBILITY:**

1. Adults will interact with children in open and lighted public places. If a video is shown, some light will remain in the room.
2. As is structurally feasible, our child care rooms will be arranged in such a way that a door is opened at all times and, or, there is a clear window in the door. Video monitors will be considered if needed. Parents are always welcome to check on their children at any time.
3. Conversations with individual children will take place in view of other adults and will not be held in a private one-on-one location.
4. Photos of children will not be allowed unless prior written parental permission is given. Pictures of children may not be posted online or publically displayed unless a signed Cadence photo release form is on file for each child in the picture.
5. Personal living quarters (bedrooms and bathrooms) of Cadence staff will not be open to people attending ministry events at their home or hospitality house, unless it is designated and marked as ministry space.

#### **SUPERVISION:**

1. Parents are ultimately responsible for their child's supervision. When in the care of our staff and workers, if a child does not abide by established guidelines and boundaries, obstructs the care of other children, places

other children at risk, or deliberately harms others, the child will be removed from the room and referred back to his or her parent or guardian.

2. Times and location for provided child care will be clearly communicated by staff and respected by all.
3. Staff and workers will not change a child's diaper or assist a child in the restroom without written permission from a parent.
4. A first aid kit and cold pack will be available at all times.
5. In case of a fire alarm or emergency evacuation, staff and workers will quickly follow safety procedures.

#### **HEALTHY RELATING:**

1. Because healthy, caring touch is valuable to children but unhealthy touch can be harmful, the following guidelines apply:
  - Touch will be in response to the need of the child and not the need of the adult.
  - Touch will be open and not secretive. For example, a hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
  - Touch will be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the worker. For example, school-age children will not sit on the laps of adults.
  - Touch will communicate respect for the child.
    - Staff and workers will not strike or hit a child.
    - Staff and workers will not kiss a child on the lips or coax a child to kiss them.
    - Staff and workers will not require a child to hug another child or the adult.
    - Pats on the head, high fives, and side hugs are examples of healthy touch.
2. Inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature such as coarse language, suggestive gestures, jokes, or remarks to and around children are not allowed.
3. Physical discipline by a parent of their own children, such as spanking or paddling, is not considered abusive as long as it is reasonable, under control, and causes no bodily injury to the child.
4. Staff and workers will use their verbal interactions with children to support and encourage the children and to honor God.
5. Technology and media will be used appropriately, and reasonable protective measures employed.



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