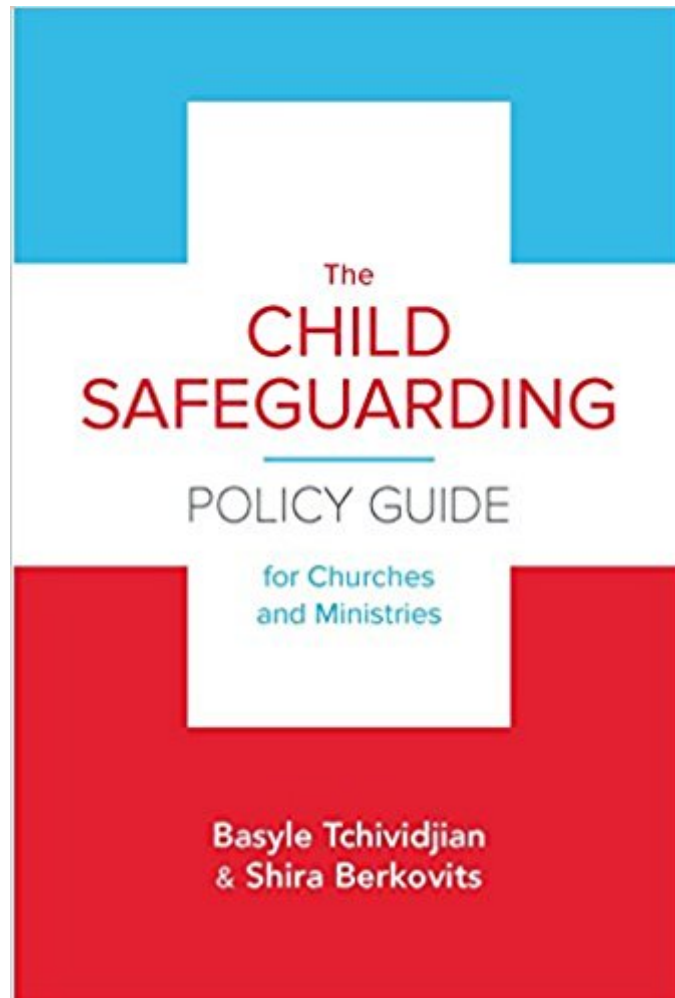




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The Child Safeguarding Policy For Churches And Ministries



Synopsis

Churches have always sought to be a safe haven for children and families, but many today are dealing with the tragic reality of child sexual abuse. For the first time in history, this issue is finally being acknowledged by churches and faith communities. But the task of developing a policy to keep children safe can seem too overwhelming it feels like an impossible task to plan for every contingency. This results in churches neglecting to put working safety plans in place, leaving themselves, and the children they care for, vulnerable. This handbook, authored and edited by a multidisciplinary team of child abuse experts, is designed to help churches and faith communities formulate policies and procedures to protect children and deal with possible child abuse in their ministries, school, and church. By walking through a wide range of scenarios, this book will assist churches and ministries to assess their current child abuse policies and guide them through each step they should take to address the safety of children under their care. Covering vitally important topics including the warning signs of abuse, how to respond to abuse allegations and care for victims, and the legal implications and requirements for churches and Christian ministries, working through this book will guide churches and Christian ministries in creating and implementing policies to protect children in a Christian environment from child abuse. This handbook is an invaluable resource for Christians who are seeking to educate themselves and others about child abuse and how they can best protect the little ones under their care.

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Customer Reviews

“This book could save your ministry. As a seminary president, I am mindful of the insidious

challenge of child sexual abuse in what should be the safest of places—the church. Boz Tchividjian and G.R.A.C.E. have provided guidelines to help churches avoid such tragedies and if they occur, how to deal with them. The Child Safeguarding Policy Guide should be required reading for every pastor, church worker, and seminarian. As uncomfortable as this topic is, Christians cannot avoid it.

• Frank A. James, President and Professor of Historical Theology, Biblical Theological Seminary

“Scripture tells us to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves—that has to include children! They have no more courageous a defender than my friend Boz, who is passionate about helping the church protect its children. Our good intentions are not enough. Use this excellent, comprehensive, and practical guide, developed by experts incorporating best-practice child protection policies and procedures, to help your church or ministry recognize, prevent and respond to child abuse. Make sure your environment is safe for innocent children and unsafe for those who would do them harm. A very important book!

• Wess Stafford, President Emeritus, Compassion International

“Forty-five years of counseling, writing, and speaking have shown me that the church is a powerful system—one meant by God to bend down as he did and care for least. I have also learned that powerful systems can easily be dangerous places for the small and the vulnerable. Sadly, the church has often protected abusers and itself, thus further traumatizing victims. The Child Safeguarding Policy Guide, coauthored by Basyle Tchividjian and Shira Berkovits, is the first book that provides the A to Z of developing comprehensive child protection policies. It is my prayer that the gift of this resource will transform the church, so she is known as a refuge for all. Diane Langberg, Psychologist; author of *Suffering and the Heart of God*

“Some lessons are much too important for pastors not to grasp early on in their ministries. One such lesson is how to protect the most vulnerable souls in our churches, namely, the children. I know of no better teacher and mentor for church leaders on this subject than Boz Tchividjian. In The Child Safeguarding Policy Guide, Boz gives pastors, children’s staff, and volunteers everything they need to protect children from having their souls vandalized by abuse. Please read this guide and, much more importantly, implement it as soon as possible in your ministry.

• Scott Sauls, Senior pastor, Christ Presbyterian Church, Nashville, TN; author of *Befriend and From Weakness to Strength*

“Many abused and neglected children have left the faith community because they found that churches are unable or unwilling to protect them. In contrast, many sex offenders love to go to church because they know that weak policies and poor training give them the best chance to get away with their crimes. The Child Safeguarding Policy Guide is a comprehensive, concrete resource that will aid churches in keeping children safe,

holding offenders accountable, and witnessing their commitment to care for the least of these.

• Victor Vieth, Senior Director & Founder, Gundersen National Child Protection Training Center

“Nobody relishes a good long talk about child abuse—especially at church. But any place where trusting children gather provides opportunities for the predator. That makes child abuse a necessary discussion for any ministry. This book provides expert advice and guidance for that conversation. I pray God will use it to bring protection to many young lives.”

• Paul O. Wendland, President and Professor of New Testament Studies, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

“As his aunt, I have known Basyle Tchividjian since before he was born. I can attest to his strong Christian character, his great sense of fun, his love for his family, his commitment to awaken the church to the growing epidemic of child sexual abuse, and his passion to do something about it. He has my applause!”

• Anne Graham Lotz, Author; speaker; chairperson of the National Day of Prayer; Supporter of Grace;

“Simply put, The Child Safeguarding Policy Guide is now the standard for any ministry desiring to create safe and protected environments where the precious souls of children can flourish. This guide provides the direction needed to implement a complete care system that prevents abuse, as well as loving interventions for those affected when the unimaginable happens. I cannot think of anyone more qualified than Boz and his team to write this groundbreaking guide.”

• Santiago

“Jimmy

• Mellado, President and CEO, Compassion International

“The Child Safeguarding Policy Guide is a much-needed, beautifully-researched resource created for churches and ministries so that all children can be protected, heard, and healed in a predatory world. Every church should read this book and put its succinct and simple policies into practice.”

• Mary DeMuth, Author of over thirty books, including Not Marked: Finding Hope and Healing after Sexual Abuse

“Jesus said, ‘Bring the children to me. . . .’ This is the definitive guide for protecting those whom we are seeking to bring to him. Detailed, practical, specific, and with appropriate recognition of when and how exceptions may be made to gold standard policies, The Child Safe-guarding Policy Guide should be in every church and Christian school library in the world.”

• Samuel T. Logan, Associate International Director, The World Reformed Fellowship

“To be welcomed into a church is to be welcomed into the arms of God’s people. It is meant to be a welcoming embrace of love. Any predatory threat to any person in that church tragically harms the whole church and poisons its capacity to embrace. Basyle Tchividjian has offered to the church an enormous gift by offering not only policies and guidelines for protecting children, but also teaching us on a subject too many have avoided. I am grateful for his

thoroughness and his obvious pastor's heart. Christian leaders should take heed.

• Greg Brewer, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Central Florida

“The Child Safeguarding Policy Guide is a book every church pastor, staff member, teacher, youth worker, and women's ministry leader should read. Written by a team of child abuse experts, and coauthored by Basyle Tchividjian of GRACE, this book offers solid practical advice for keeping church children safe from sexual and other forms of abuse. It is a must read and I highly recommend this book.”

• Denise George, Author of over thirty books, including *What Pastors Wish Church Members Knew*

“Being a local church pastor for almost fifty years, I know of no better organization or system of safeguarding the children of our church than GRACE ministries. I have learned from and admired Boz for years. This amazing book gives every church the best equipping tool to protect our most precious congregants (our children) from the most heinous of acts.”

• Joel C. Hunter, Senior Pastor, Northland, A Church Distributed

“Child abuse is a fearful, uncomfortable, and shocking topic that some church leaders may want to ignore. But Jesus's ministers must run TOWARD the battle. We're called to disciple children to be worshipers of God—but you can't disciple an unsafe child. Safeguarding is a spiritual pursuit. Basyle Tchividjian and the GRACE team have crafted an invaluable resource to educate and guide church leaders in building a safe discipling environment for children. We've used this training at Thomas Road Baptist and will definitely utilize this guide with our team.”

• Matt Willmington, Director of Ministries, Thomas Road Baptist Church

“The Child Safeguarding Policy Guide for Churches and Ministries is a crucially important handbook for the protection of our children. Churches and faith communities should be one of the safest places for children to grow up, learn, and play. Tragically, this is not always the case. Basyle Tchividjian and Shira Berkovits bring not only their hearts to this mission but years of dedication and experience in this field. This book is an answer to prayer for those who deeply desire to protect the children of their communities and who are seeking practical guidance in how to achieve this. Protecting our most vulnerable should always be of absolute importance for all of us. Amidst the untold suffering and silence, we hear the words of Christ in our hearts saying,

“Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.”

• Jonathan Jackson, Star of CMT's Nashville; Lead singer of Enation; author of *The Mystery of Art*

Basyle (Boz) Tchividjian is a former child-abuse prosecutor who currently teaches Child Abuse and the Law and several other courses at Liberty University School of Law. Professor Tchividjian is also

the founder and executive director of GRACE (Godly Response to Abuse in the Christian Environment). The third eldest grandchild of Reverend Billy Graham, he wrote the book *Invitation: Billy Graham and the Lives God Touched*. Shira M. Berkovits is founder and CEO of Sacred Spaces, a cross-denominational initiative to create systemic solutions to abuse in communal institutions. In this capacity she has worked with faith communities around the world to develop policies and training to prevent and respond to institutional abuse. She is a psychologist and attorney, and has completed postdoctoral fellowships in child trauma and rehabilitative alternatives to incarceration. Prior to founding Sacred Spaces, Dr. Berkovits worked on issues of youth advocacy, child protection, and criminal justice reform.

Why I Choose this Book: I work with kids in our church some, and I want to continue working with kids in different venues as a writer, therefore I thought it would be helpful to learn how to respond correctly if I ever come across an instance of abuse.

What I Thought about this Book: It's not light reading. By the time the book arrived I was having second guesses about if it would really be worthwhile enough for me to read it compared to how much sadness the book was going to contain. It makes me so sad to think of how many kids have suffered, and that the world has so many horrible people that books like these actually need to be written. In the end I decided to skim quite a bit of this book as I wanted to get the gist of the information, but in the position I'm currently in I didn't need to have details on what different kinds of child abuse looks like. This book contained a lot of good, good information regarding how to make churches and ministries places of safety for children. Through the pages you can learn what signs of abuse are, what to do if you find out a child is being abused, and how to keep your church safe. This includes what to look for in volunteers and staff, and also how to keep your church building itself a place of safety and openness. I was amazed at how thorough this book was. The point of the book is to help churches and ministries know how to write a good safeguarding policy, and then put it into place in everyday life. At the end of each chapter there were examples of what the wording could look like in an official policy. There were also a lot of sample pages as samples for questions to ask potential staff, samples of letters to write while working on forming a committee to put the policy into place, and the list goes on.

Conclusion: Although this book wasn't fun to read, and it contained a lot of sadness, it was also enlightening and despite the skimming, I learned from it. Overall I'm thankful I read the book, although I don't really recommend it to people who aren't actively helping lead a church or ministry. For the intended

audience though? Yes, I would recommend it. Rating: 5 out of 5 stars, and 10 out of 10. *I received this book from Litfuse in exchange for a review

The Child Safeguarding Policy for Churches and Ministries is the book any Christian ministry needs in order to set up a policy for employees and volunteers in a church, school, camp, or any para-church ministry that works with children. Over the years I have worked in almost every area of ministry at our church, including the school and camp our church owns. Twenty years ago, the state of Colorado required all "religious" entities that work with children to have a written policy of what abuse is, and how we intended to keep the laws set up to protect the children who came through the church, school, or camp. Today my son and daughter-in-law head up the training each employee or volunteer at our church must go through each year in order to work with the children the Lord brings into each ministry. (They will get my copy of this e-book that was provided by the publisher in exchange for an honest review.) There are many organizations out there who actually can help in training employees and volunteers in order to be in compliance with each state's laws concerning abuse. But those who wrote this policy book are considered among the most experienced with the most practical advice. The book is divided into five sections covering a definition of every kind of abuse, a plan for protecting the children in our ministry, a plan for responding to policy violations and child abuse, a plan for ministering to those who have been abused, and a plan for living the policy. Each chapter ends with a sample wording for a church policy manual, plus sample forms located in the Appendices. Having been through the training for adults working in children's ministries, I found this book to cover each topic thoroughly with easy to understand narrative and case studies. The sample forms easily delineate what each is for and why it exists. As a former teacher, mom, grandma, camp kitchen coordinator and counselor, I found this book extremely helpful and thorough in helping a ministry like ours make sure they are in compliance with the law. I highly recommend the book and commend the authors for addressing this difficult topic in a kind and compassionate way.

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