

Child Protection Protocols for Mission Trips Volunteer Agreement

You must be aware of cultural differences with child discipline and protective behaviours.

Cultures vary greatly in what they consider appropriate. During a trip, our role is not to criticize host behaviour, but to model the best Christian care of children and young people in the context with which we work. It is important that you debrief in distressing situations.

1. **A Child Protection Officer** should be appointed to monitor potential risk areas and/ or behaviour during Missions trips. You are accountable to this leader. Children, youth or team members may come to this leader with a complaint or concern.
2. **You must complete screening processes** including completing any volunteer application forms. You should complete any child protection training required for the trip.
3. **You are not allowed to be alone with a child at any time unless the child is your own family.** Always have another leader with you who is not related to you – i.e. not you brother, sister, spouse, son or daughter OR always have more than one child with you. If individual counselling or prayer ministry is required, do this in the view of others.
4. **You must never share a bed with a child** who is not your own and children should not share beds. No team member should share sleeping quarters with a child alone unless that child is their own. Pyjamas should be worn and need to be modest and not see-through and dressing gowns or track suits should be worn over pyjamas unless in bed.

For ministry directly involving Children or Young people:

5. **You cannot take children to the toilet alone.** Again always have another unrelated adult with you or more than one child. Direct the child to the toilet, making sure there are no other adults inside first. If there are adults in the toilet, wait for them to leave or politely ask them to do so. Do not help a child with toileting (unless it is obviously necessary -in which case you must have 2 unrelated adults supervising children being assisted). Babies' nappies should be changed by parents. Toilet blocks should be monitored for team members or children loitering or following children to these areas.
6. **You should not leave children alone and unsupervised.**

7. **You should avoid any behaviour that could be wrongly perceived. Be aware of cultural differences with acceptable physical contact, gestures and even eye contact.** You may not actively seek touching or hugging or kiss children or ask them to sit on your lap. You should not initiate wrestling or tickling. Keep you interactions to commonly accepted public expressions of friendship. Be aware of cultural differences in touch, eye contact and greetings.
8. **You cannot take children on night hikes or off walking or participating in any activity where you are not in view of other team members.**
9. **Any swimming activity must be done as a group.** Swim wear needs to be modest
10. **You cannot hit or shout at a child.** Children should be given positive direction. Allow host team to deal appropriately with misbehaviour, but give clear guidelines about your expectations to both host team and children first.
11. **You must have sufficient leaders** in order that children can be properly supervised according to their age.
12. **You should not transport children alone** unless that child is your own.
13. **First Aid should be given by the designated First Aid Officer.**
14. **Any accident or injury or other incident requires an Incident Report Form to be completed and witnessed.**

I agree that:

- I will ensure the well-being and safety of all children and young people in my capacity as a volunteer of Rivers Edge Church
- I will not be alone with a child at any time
- I will not be involved in toileting, dressing or showering with children alone
- I will not counsel or pray with children alone and out of sight of others
- I will not kiss, cuddle, wrestle or tickle a child in any way that could be interpreted as inappropriate. I will not ask children to sit on my lap
- I will not hit or shout at a child at any time
- I will not have sleeping arrangements that could be interpreted as inappropriate
- I will ensure my dress and sleeping attire are suitably modest
- I will notify the Child Protection Officer if I am concerned about the behaviour of any other person in relation to children