



**POLICY  
PROTECTION  
FOR CHILDREN AND  
ADOLESCENTS**



# 1. INTRODUCTION

## CHILD AND TEENAGER PROTECTION POLICY OF WMB

The World Missions Board (WMB) is an organization of the executive Brazilian Baptist Convention (BBC), created in 1907, for the expansion of missionary work beyond the Brazilian borders, and for the awakens and preparation of people with a vocation for missions, among many other actions that contribute to the Gospel proclamation. Our view refers to the excellence of the Gospel expansion to all people. Our mission is to serve and mobilize churches related to BBC enabling the global missionary vision. Therefore, our function is to empower people holistically (physically, psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually) to exercise their ministry, enabling this work in a transcultural context. Currently, we act in different countries in America, Africa, Europe, and Asia through evangelization, church planting, and the development of programs and social humanitarian projects with people of different ages in situations of vulnerability and social risks. The WMB interacts with children and teenagers through churches, programs, and projects, as well as through marketing and campaigns which use images, testimonies, and stories to promote its work and awakens for missionary vocation. The WMB recognizes, through many studies of national and international organizations, that there are risks of violence and exploitation of vulnerable children, teenagers, and adults in all contexts. Violence against children and teenagers has become a sad world phenomenon, which has caused severe damage to their well-being and human development. We believe that everyone involved with the work with children and teenagers has the essential duty to take care of them, to protect them against any type of violence or exploitation. Therefore, it is demanded from the members of the team of WMB to behave with professionalism and integrity for the good testimony of the Gospel and the protection of children and teenagers.



# care...

## CHILD AND TEENAGER PROTECTION POLICY

This policy is the expression of how the WMB leadership deals with this issue in several contexts. It is based on the biblical principles, and on the Convention of the Children' Rights (adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations), on the Child and Teenager Constitution (as possible), and on internationally recognized practices, including the protective laws of each country. The objective is to offer guidance to all cooperators, missionaries, volunteers, and partners of WMB in Brazil and in the acting countries about the recommended practices for the prevention and how to proceed in situations of violence and exploitation of children and teenagers. The Child and Teenager Protection Policy will be written in this document through the initials CTPP.

## 2. DEFINITION OF TERMS

### CHILD AND TEENAGER

In general terms, the definition of a child refers to any person under 18 years old.

In Brazil, the Child and Teenager Constitution defines a child as a person who is 12 years incomplete, and a teenager as a person who is between 12 to 18 years old.

### VIOLENCES

**a) Physical:** "It is an act of physical assault to the child or teenager, committed by an adult or older child, which causes injury, even not having the intention." This type of assault includes: beating, shaking, pulling, pushing, throwing a child or teenager in the air, burning, suffocating, or other physical damage. It also includes giving dangerous substances like alcohol and drugs. The impact of this category of violence directly leads to pain, neurological damage, disability, or death. This category can also lead to low self-esteem and aggressive behavior;

**b) Emotional:** It is the maltreatment of the child's emotions. It "involves behavior that interfere in the mental health of the child or teenager or its social development". It includes: verbal violence (intimidating, offending, making a negative comparison, saying that he/she has no value, usually blaming him/her), not giving affection (ignoring), extremely punishing (making the child to feel insecure or in danger), exploiting, practicing what is known as bullying. All types of violence cause emotional damage to the child. The impact of this category of violence can lead to lasting effects in the process of development, promoting low a level of activity and a high level of criticism;

**c) Sexual:** : It is "any sexual act between an adult and a child or teenager" or between a bigger child and a smaller one. It involves forcing the child to take part in sexual or libidinous activities, like physical contact,

including penetration or non-penetrative acts, touches, privacy violation (undressing, spying on a child), exposure of a child to an adult sexuality or pornography materials, encouraging the child to sexually behave inadequately. The result of this type of violence includes self-damage, inadequate sexual behavior, sadness, low self-esteem;

**d) Negligence:** It is "the low standard or failure in providing the basic needs of a child, in a such way that her physical or psychological well-being is damaged or put into danger". In this category of violence, the parents or guardians simply choose to fail and not accomplish their obligations. Negligence of a child includes 1) physical – failing to provide adequate food, clothes, or necessary hygiene conditions to the health care, child abandonment, expelling children from their homes; 2) educational – failing to register a child at school or allow/cause her to miss many days of class; 3) emotional – inadequate comfort and affection, failing to interfere when a child shows an- antisocial behavior, refusing or taking too long to provide necessary psychological care. The result of this category of violence is associated with damage to the growth and intellectual development of the child.

### RELIGIOUS ABUSE

It happens when somebody by power, guard, leadership, or influence, in a religious context, uses his/her authority to control, coerce, manipulate or dominate people to satisfy their selfish desires.

### DAMAGING TRADITIONAL PRACTICES

They are cultural and traditional practices of a person of an ethnic group that are harmful to the good development of the child and teenager, putting them in a social risk situation. Examples of these practices include female genital mutilation, and child weddings, among others.

### EXPLOITATION

It is about using the child in labor or activities for the benefit of others. It includes work and child sex abuse. These activities are damaging to the physical and mental health, education, and holistic development of a child.

## COOPERATOR

A cooperator is an employee of the headquarter of WMB, according to current Brazilian labor laws.

## MISSIONARY

A missionary is the one commissioned by a Brazilian Baptist church through the BBC to a transcultural missionary field. He/she can be a long-term missionary, an associate, or a local worker. The complete description of missionary categories is written in the Missionary Manual of WMB.

## VOLUNTEER

A volunteer is a person available to make a religious and humanitarian activity through WMB, supporting one or more projects, being able to get into to the field alone or in a group, funding their expenses to make these activities. He/she has no employment bond to WMB, in the form of law.

## PARTNER

A partner is an institution or physical person with whom WMB establishes an agreement to make activities or projects inside or outside Brazil.

# commitment...

## 3. COMMITMENT DECLARATION



The WMB through its cooperators, missionaries, volunteers, and partners is committed to the well-being and protection of children and teenagers in the world. The WMB recommends best practices and procedures to its team and partners through work development norms and support to areas of activity, to promote safe environments for children and adolescents who are directly or indirectly involved in its activities.

WMB is opposed to all forms of violence, negligence, and exploitation in line with biblical principles and the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.



## 4. POLICY OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION



The WMB commits to deal biblically, ethically, and legally with the issue of child and teenager protection, providing information and formation to its headquarter cooperators, missionaries, local workers, volunteers, institutions, and partners. The executive director board of WMB and its managers has the responsibility of promoting opportunities to present and discuss the issue of child and teenager protection with all its leaders and partners inside the organizational structure.

The WMB commits to establishing a communication process inside its working structure, which includes its executive director board and all people directly or indirectly involved in the activities with children and teenagers.

WMB's CTPP must be shared in its communication channels. It must be present in the cooperators' selection process for the headquarter and candidates for the missionary career, being long-term or with a pre-determined period, so the candidates should know and commit themselves to its guidelines.

In the process of sending individual volunteers, small groups, or caravans, WMB's CTPP must be presented to the candidates and the candidates must completely agree with its guidelines and practices, through an agreement term between the candidate and WMB.

WMB's CTPP must be part of the curriculum of its Formation Program. It must be mentioned in the current version of the Missionary Manual. It must also be available for research at any moment during the exercise of missionary activities through physical or electronic means.

The WMB commits to promoting the information update of the CTPP through communication and the formation of its cooperators and missionaries in all categories.

All programs and projects of WMB must consider the perspective of the WMB's CTPP in its planning, evaluation of its activities and impacts, and must be in agreement with this document in its procedures and practices.

*responsibility...*

## 5. NORMS OF CONDUCT FOR THE WHOLE FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURE

The norms established below must be followed by all personnel that have any bond with WMB and that interact directly or indirectly with children and teenagers. Children are gifts of God; they need and must be treated with love, respect, attention, and dignity. Therefore, the executive director, managers, coordinators, cooperators, missionaries, local workers, and volunteers of WMB must:

**a.** Show a behavior that represents an excellent example for the children and teenagers;

**b.** Treat all children and teenagers in a way that reflects the love of God for them;

**c.** Be careful, protecting themselves from any possibility of false accusations of violence that may be practiced by children or teenagers;

**d.** Always prioritize the well-being of children and the teenagers;

**e.** Treat all children and teenagers with dignity and respect, with no discrimination or prejudice regarding their social class, race, culture, age, sex, disability (special need), or sexuality;



age...

**f.** Not show favoritism for any child or teenager in particular and not avoid the ones that present difficult behavior.

**g.** Avoid working alone with children and teenagers. They should always develop their work in pairs or teams.

**h.** As an adult, never be alone with a child or teenager. Even if one adult may be in a private talk with one of them, another adult must be in visual contact. Anyone visiting a child or teenager that is alone at home must do so followed by another person;

**i.** As an adult, be always responsible for their behavior, even when a child or teenager is behaving sensually and provocatively;

**j.** If you feel uncomfortable with the behavior of a child or teenager, explain to him/her that his/her behavior is unacceptable but do that in a way that he/she will not feel rejected. This situation must be communicated to your superior immediately;

**k.** Always talk to your coordinator or leader of the program about any problem related to child and teenager protection;

**l.** Build balanced relationship with children and teenagers, based on mutual trust;

**m.** Never use physical punishment, without exception;

**n.** Never exaggerate or banalize issues of violence; never allow any complaint done by a child or teenager to happen without being recorded and sent to the WMB personnel responsible for the Protection of the region;

**o.** Always accompany people that are not part of the team in the visits of projects, programs and/or activities that deals with children and teenagers;

**p.** Be careful when in physical contact with children and teenager, which can only happen with their consent. Sometimes physical contact is unavoidable, like when a child cries or needs help in games or plays. Be attentive to excessive affection with him/her;

**q.** Request written permission of parents or guardians if people from the team need to transport children and teenagers in their cars;

**r.** Have written permission from the parents in case of need to apply first aid and/or medical treatment for children and teenagers. The first aid given must be written, recorded and the parents or guardians must be informed;

**s.** Request written permission to take pictures and use the image of children and teenagers. The parents must know when, where, and how the images can be used so that they can give their permission;

**t.** Individual pictures must not be posted on social networks with their data. The pictures must be preferably in groups. Their names must be changed in newsletters and any reference to specific geographical localization suppressed. The communication about children and teenagers must reflect images that preserve their dignity, that are decent and respectful and that do not exploit in any circumstance.

**u.** Make children and teenagers aware about their rights, about what is acceptable or not, and what they can do in case there is a problem or a violent situation.

## 6. PROCEDURES NORMS WITH PARTNERS

The WMB, as much in Brazil as abroad, relates with institutions that share the same view and availability in the expansion of missionary work in the world. In some cases, missionary partnerships that contemplate activities with children and teenagers are developed.

The WMB requires its partners to commit to following the laws from their respective countries about child and teenager protection, as well as observe and adhere to practices and procedures of the WMB's CTPP, and yet to other policies and practices that provide a safe environment.

The partner institutions must have clearly stated their declaration of commitment against child and teenager violence or adhere to the WMB's CTPP. This way, the WMB commits to developing partnerships with institutions that have this commitment to the safety and integrity of children, as much in the prevention, through contribution to a safe environment, as in the treaty of violent occurrences.

*partnership...*





## 7. RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES

General guidelines to recruit cooperators, missionaries, local workers, and volunteers that will work with WMB: The people that work or develop projects with children and teenagers directly and regularly by WMB are recruited and their backgrounds are verified, according to the legal instances in their cultural context.

**a)** All the team of WMB (executive board directors, managers, coordinators, missionaries, local workers, and volunteers) shall fill out a form that will request information about their criminal background and/or a clearance declaration for the exercise of the function, depending on the context;

**b)** They will be requested a letter from their respective religious communities, including references about their previous experience at the work or ministry with children;

**c)** A thorough interview shall be done with those interested in developing works with children and teenagers in the projects and programs of WMB, to gather information about their family history, professional background, relationships, church, ministry and, etc.;

**d)** It will be also requested a document of identity or passport (in case of foreigners) for our records;

**e)** All the people recruited must be instructed about their responsibilities, including explanations about the WMB's CTPP, right from the start of their activities. This document shall be signed before the selected ones may exercise their tasks.

collaboration...





## 8. ANSWER TO SUSPICIONS AND COMPLAINTS



### GENERAL PROCEDURES

WMB will assure some basic procedures answering to suspicions, complaints and revelations about violence against children and teenagers. All the cooperators and missionaries have the responsibility to be attentive to the violent signs (physical, emotional, sexual, negligence, and others) and take any worries, suspicions, or complaints to the person designated by WMB and the legal authorities. Every complaint of a suspicious or proven case of violence against any child or teenager must be properly recorded in a proper document. The documents or forms for this record must be known by all the cooperators and missionaries of all categories, being available and of easy access. All the suspicions or complaints of parents/guardians and beneficiaries of the programs or social projects about unacceptable or abusive behaviors toward children and teenagers must be heard, recorded, reported, and communicated to competent authorities. The parents or guardians of a child or teenager that becomes a victim of violence, inside the ministries of WMB, must be firstly informed, except in cases where they are GENERAL

PROCEDURES the suspects or indicated, by the child or third ones as authors.

We will believe in the child and teenager until it is proven the opposite. Every and any reported complaint will be verified inside the current legal procedures. The WMB will follow the guidelines of the Child and Teenager Constitution to the referral of occurrences in Brazil. For the acting fields of WMB, guidelines of the local laws and international guidance will be followed. The WMB will make every effort to provide adequate care for the people involved, either the victim, or the offender, to lead to treatment, restoration, and healing.

security...

## 9. RIGHTS OF DEFENSE

Each cooperator or missionary of WMB is committed to working with other groups that express, through this policy or declaration, the same interests in child and teenager protection. These groups must show, through practices and procedures, the worries of contributing to a safe environment.

The WMB commits to providing information and formation about the protection, prevention, and treatment of violent situations against children and teenagers. Materials in hard and/or electronic copies will be available for research by any person or institution that has signed a partnership with WMB.

The WMB has one or more designated people that will ease the application of its CTPP, as much in communication plans and formation as in the solving of problems related to this topic under its projects.

Each acting region of WMB and its headquarters in Brazil might have one or more people designated as responsible for the issue of child and teenager protection. Therefore, the WMB has a responsible person that can be accessed for any structural level of this organization.

The WMB is available, inside its CTPP, to work with other groups and institutions that want to join forces in the fight against violence and exploitation to of children and teenagers, through the promotion of information and formation.

rights...

## 10. CONFIDENTIALITY

The WMB commits to keeping the confidentiality of the information about complaints of suspicious and confirmed cases related to child and teenager violence. The WMB commits to remaining accessible to any person who would like to make a complaint, either by personal contact, by telephone, by physical correspondence, or by electronic means.

All the information received is treated with the same confidentiality and importance, independent of the person to which has been sent.

The WMB commits to giving total priority to keeping the integrity and image of the child, as well as her physical and emotional well-being during the whole process of complaints referral received or situations observed by its representants.

trust...



## 11. PROCEDURES FOR THE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The WMB will make the following procedures to drive CTPP implementation:

- a.** Designate a person who will be responsible for children and teenager protection in general and another one responsible for each acting region of WMB in the field, that will receive proper formation and support for this role. All the cooperators and missionary staff of WMB, in each field, will know the names of the designated personnel;
- b.** Promote the incorporation of measures of child and teenager protection in all internal processes, thus, in the strategic plan and action plans of all activities of missions managers, financial and communication, and marketing;
- c.** Assure that CTPP is included in the welcome package of new cooperators, missionaries, local workers, and volunteers;
- d.** Promote the initial and ongoing training of cooperators and missionaries of different segments for everyone's responsibility in the application and implementation of this policy;
- e.** Certificate that all the cooperators, missionaries, volunteers, and partners are aware of and sign the Commitment Declaration of WMB about Children and Teenagers Protection;
- f.** Assure that in the activities, programs, and social projects, the parents or guardians acknowledges the responsibility of WMB related to protection of the children and the teenagers, making known their obligations through CTPP;
- g.** Develop effective connections with agencies and cooperators that have similar objectives, which are related to child and teenager protection, including participation in events and conferences;
- h.** Review this policy every three years or when a new practice is urgently needed.

practice...



# supervision...

## 12. MONITORING

The responsible group for the issue of Child and Teenager Protection of WMB will monitor the implementation of the CTPP by collecting and recording information on incidents in specific forms, as well as by reporting data forwarding in situations of violence in the scope of the organization.

The responsible group will report periodically on the progress of implementation to the Executive Board of Directors of the World Missions Board.



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# Annex 1

## World Missions Board of the Brazilian Baptist Convention

### COMMITMENT DECLARATION

The WMB through its cooperators, missionaries, volunteers, and partners is committed to the well-being and protection of the children and teenagers in the world. The WMB recommends best practices and procedures to its team and partners through work development norms and support to areas of activity, to promote safe environments for children and adolescents who are directly or indirectly involved in its activities. WMB is opposed to all forms of violence, negligence, and exploitation, in line with biblical principles and the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Therefore:

I .....,  
ID number....., in the function of .....  
read the commitment declaration of WMB, and I am aware that it is my duty to protect the children and the teenagers with whom I have contact, loving them and respecting them and not omitting any situation of violence or exploitation. I agree with the terms of CCPT of WMB and I commit to accomplish them.

Date: .....

Signature: .....





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