

CHILD ABUSE POLICY

The staff and administration of Mountainview Christian School recognize that while abuse of any nature is a sad and difficult issue to deal with, it is also an unfortunate reality in this world. We have developed this policy and the attached forms to try to prevent abuse and to handle any abuse allegations that may arise. With any case that may arise, we agree, as a Christian community, to handle conflict and confrontation in a biblical manner. We will seek the good of all parties involved and attempt to handle each situation with Christ-like love.

Mountainview Guidelines for Those Who Supervise/Assist Children

Mountainview administrators, teachers, dorm parents, and others as decided by the Administration must complete the Mountainview Child Supervision Form. The Administration will decide whether individuals are fit to supervise MCS children. This form will be used for Mountainview staff and any other adult supervisors who will participate in Mountainview activities.

Sponsoring Organizations

We are aware that many staff and volunteers are sponsored by organizations (including businesses) other than Mountainview. We realize that these agencies have their own policies regarding issues of abuse. It is our goal to work cooperatively with other organizations, including sharing information, in any situations regarding abuse.

Definition of Adult

An adult is any person who has reached his/her 18th birthday and is not a student enrolled in Mountainview Christian School.

Abuse Perpetrators who are Mountainview Students

It is acknowledged that a person who has not yet reached age 18 may perpetrate abuse as defined in this policy. Most cases involving student perpetrators (regardless of their age) will be handled under the Standard of Conduct as stated in the Student Handbook. However, if an extraordinary circumstance occurs with a student perpetrator, the Administration may choose, after careful consideration, to label the situation Child Abuse and follow the procedures as stated in this policy.

Age Factor

Child abuse will not be tolerated at Mountainview Christian School whether the abuse occurs child to child or adult to child.

1. **Adult to Child Cases:** Any instance in which an abuser is over 18 years of age or a student who has graduated from the 12th grade will be considered adult to child abuse. Normally this would be when there is a difference in power based on age, or physical, intellectual or emotional capacity. Child abuse is recognized under four categories: Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Sexual Abuse and Neglect.
2. **Child-to-Child Cases:** Should both the victim and the alleged offender be under the age of 18 or both still enrolled in high school, it will typically be considered abuse if there is more than three years difference (1095 days or more) between the children or there is a difference in responsibility, trust, or power between them. If there is less than three years age difference and there is not a significant difference in responsibility, trust, or power between them, what would normally be defined as abuse will be considered inappropriate behavior, with an action plan put in place to address the behaviors of concern and their effects. Child-to-child cases will be judged on a case-by-case basis.

Child-to-child abuse includes all types of abuse defined below.

Definition of Abuse

Child abuse includes physical abuse/neglect, sexual abuse (whether verbal, visual or physical), and emotional abuse. Abusers may be parents, teachers, school staff (expatriates or nationals), students, expatriate community members, or Indonesian community members.

1. Physical abuse is defined as any act which results in a non-accidental physical injury usually as the result of unreasonably severe corporal punishment, unjustified punishment, bizarre forms of punishment, extreme disregard for caution, or severe “mean-spiritedness.”
2. Neglect is defined as a long term failure to meet the basic needs of a child for food/nutrition, shelter, safety, nurturing, health care, schooling, and socialization.
3. Sexual Abuse
 - a. Verbal sexual abuse is defined as remarks (face-to-face or via phone, SMS, e-mail or letter) which include sexual threats, innuendoes, sexually explicit comments about a person’s body, solicitation, inappropriate sexual talking, obscenities, or any expression with intent to arouse or stimulate.
 - b. Visual sexual abuse is defined as indecent exposure, showing or taking of suggestive pictures, peeping, leering, or staring at certain body parts. Visual sexual abuse also includes voyeurism, exhibitionism, showing of pornographic material, of genitals, pubic area, buttocks, or, if such person is a female, breasts, with the intent to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of either party.
 - c. Physical sexual abuse is defined by fondling, sexual touching, masturbation in front of, or to the victim, rubbing, holding, and kissing for the purpose of sexual gratification. Further examples include oral, genital, anal, and breast stimulation; penetration by penis, fingers, or any other body part or object, of mouth, anus, or vagina; physical contact with a person’s clothed or unclothed genitals, pubic area, buttocks, or, if such person is a female, breast, with the intent to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of either party.
4. Emotional abuse includes chronic attitudes or acts that are likely to produce serious long-term emotional disorders. These may include chronic derogatory name calling, threats, blaming, sarcasm, belittling, criticism, constant yelling, and consistently using vocal tones, body language, and/or attitudes which demean a person.

Reporting Abuse

Keep in mind that experts in the area of abuse advise that there is a 90% probability of truthfulness to abuse allegations.

Abuse must be reported to the superintendent if it occurred on school property, occurred when a child was supervised by a Mountainview staff member, or occurred during a Mountainview sponsored activity. If an incident occurs off school property during a situation not sponsored by the school, it must be reported if a Mountainview student/staff is the victim or if a Mountainview student/staff is the alleged perpetrator. Depending on the circumstances there will be limits to the actions which can be taken by Mountainview.

Promptly report the abuse allegation or situation in a brief meeting to the superintendent, or, if he/she is unavailable, another member of the Administration and complete the [Report Form](#) which will include:

1. name of the victim and the suspect

2. relevant date or dates, times, and locations of misconduct
3. setting of misconduct
4. specific nature of misconduct (as described in the "Definition of Abuse" section of this document)
5. tangible evidence, witnesses, records, etc.
6. names and phone numbers of any other people who know about the situation

The **superintendent** will then take steps to appoint a small team to handle the investigation. Neither the accused nor the victim will be part of the team. It is acknowledged that this team is not professional or part of the criminal justice system. An information officer on the team will record all pertinent information. The **information officer** will:

1. keep a log, including dates and times, of information regarding the crisis.
2. record all information (including rumors) related to the case.
3. develop an official report which will be released to the parents, school board, mission organization or authorities
4. attend all meetings and be updated on all phone conversations, e-mails, etc.

The investigating team will then determine what needs to be done to:

1. protect the victim (including plans for getting skilled appropriate care for the victim)
2. inform the victim's parents
3. inform the victim's sponsoring organization if applicable.
4. inform the perpetrator's sponsoring organization and/or parents, if applicable.
5. inform local and/or home country authorities (if necessary)
6. develop a plan for dealing with the accused which may include administrative leave if the accused is a Mountainview employee.

Community Security

The superintendent and/or investigative team may decide that new security measures must be taken in light of a child abuse situation. The superintendent will decide specifically who needs to be notified and what steps need to be taken.

Treatment/Healing for the Victim

The superintendent will (or will appoint a person to) ensure that the victim is heard and protected. Skilled, appropriate care will be made available (possibly arranged through a sponsoring organization), including adequate follow-up. Victim care includes attention to confidentiality.

Treatment/Healing for the Accused

Appropriate, wise measures should be taken to assist the accused, whether or not he/she is found guilty. Confidentiality is a very important issue, especially before there is a determination of innocence or guilt.