Credo Academy Adult/Child Abuse and Misconduct Policy

Credo Academy works as an umbrella organization facilitating a relationship between Christian independent contractors/instructors and Christian homeschool families. Credo Academy works to protect our shared interest in educating homeschooled students in a safe and engaging environment while honoring Jesus Christ.

Credo Academy does not permit or allow any abuse or misconduct (sexual or non-sexual) to occur in its organization or at any activity sponsored by or related to it. *(1 Thessalonians 4: 3-8) To make this “zero-tolerance” policy clear to all families, independent contractors (instructors), volunteers, and board members, we have adopted mandatory procedures that families, volunteers, independent contractors (instructors), board members, individuals, and victims must follow when they learn of or witness abuse or misconduct (sexual or non-sexual). Those reasonably suspected or believed to have committed abuse or misconduct (sexual or non-sexual) will be appropriately disciplined, up to and including termination of association/relationship with Credo Academy in any capacity, as well as criminal prosecution. No independent contractor (instructor), family member, volunteer, board member, or person, regardless of his or her title or position has the authority to commit or allow abuse or misconduct (sexual or non-sexual). Sexual abuse or misconduct includes sexual assault, battery, abuse, exploitation, molestation, harassment, or injury of or directed at a person. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature of or directed at a person. Non-sexual abuse or misconduct includes all non-sexual assault, abuse, neglect, or battery of or directed at a person.

Prevention

Credo Academy works to provide a safe environment for all who utilize its services. To prevent any abuse or misconduct (sexual or non-sexual) Credo Academy takes the following steps:

- Interview every family, volunteer, and independent contractor (instructor) who is associated with Credo Academy and acquire the signatures of all participants to ensure each party is aware of policies and procedures, agreeing to adhere to the code of conduct that requires respectful behavior to all involved and to testify to their commitment to Biblical teachings that prohibit all forms of abuse and

misconduct, and encourage holy living that is above reproach. *(1 Thessalonians 4: 3-8) **(Romans 13: 8-10)

- Completes background checks on all independent contractors (instructors) that will have contact with students.
- Requires parents to register students in any class(es) that may require 1:1 in-person contact and therefore the parent gives their consent. There is to be no in-person 1:1 contact without parental consent.
- Allow (and sometimes required depending on the age of the student) parents to be on the premises with their student(s) to ensure their student(s) are safe and display appropriate behavior.
- Because parents are in a direct contractual relationship with their student's instructors and because parents are involved in the larger Credo Academy community through volunteering, they can be involved in every aspect of their child's time at Credo Academy to ensure their student's safety and upright conduct.

Reporting Procedure

Immediately report suspected abuse or misconduct (sexual or non-sexual) to Credo Academy board members at credoboard@gmail.com or any member of leadership. Find their current contact information in the Credo Academy Directory. It is not required to directly confront the person who is the source of the report, question, or complaint before notifying any of the individuals listed. Credo Academy will take every reasonable measure to ensure that those named in the complaint of misconduct or are too closely associated with those involved will not be part of the investigative team. Intentional false reporting or false accusations are illegal.

Investigation & Follow Up

Credo Academy will take all allegations of abuse or misconduct (sexual or non-sexual) seriously and will promptly, thoroughly, and equitably investigate whether misconduct has taken place. Credo Academy may utilize an outside third party to conduct an investigation of misconduct. Our organization will cooperate fully with any investigation conducted by law enforcement or other regulatory/protective services agencies. To the fullest extent possible, but consistent with our legal obligation to report suspected abuse to appropriate authorities, we will endeavor to keep the identities of the alleged victims and the subject of the investigation confidential.

If the investigation substantiates the allegation, our policy provides for disciplinary penalties, including but not limited to termination of the offender's association/relationship with Credo Academy.

Retaliation Prohibited

We prohibit any retaliation against anyone, including any member of a family, independent contractor (instructor), volunteer, board member, student, or individual, who in good faith reports abuse or misconduct (sexual or non-sexual), alleges that it is being committed or participates in the investigation. Intentionally false or malicious accusations of abuse or misconduct (sexual or non-sexual) are prohibited. Anyone who improperly retaliates against someone who has made a good faith allegation of abuse or misconduct

(sexual or non-sexual), or intentionally provides false information to that effect, will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination from association with Credo Academy.

Reporting to Law Enforcement or Appropriate Child or Adult Protective Services

Credo Academy is committed to following the state and federal legal requirements for reporting allegations or incidents of abuse or misconduct (sexual or non-sexual) to appropriate law enforcement and child or adult protective services organizations. It is the policy of Credo Academy not to attempt to investigate or assess the validity or credibility of an allegation of abuse or misconduct (sexual or non-sexual) as a condition before reporting the allegation to proper law enforcement authorities or protective services organizations.

Bible References:

*1 Thessalonians 4: 3-8

For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

**Romans 13:8-10

Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline, 844-CO-4-Kids