

VI. CHILD SAFETY POLICY

PURPOSE - _____ Church seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for children who participate in our programs and activities. Through implementing the practices below, our goal is to protect the children of _____ Church from incidents of sexual misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting our staff and volunteers from false accusations.

A. STANDARD OF CONDUCT

All _____ Church workers (volunteer, paid, full-time and part-time) are expected to comply with this Child Safety Policy. Violations of this policy will be dealt with promptly and may include legal ramifications when required by law.

B. DEFINITIONS

1. Child Sexual Abuse – “any sexual activity with a child, whether in the home by a caretaker, in a day care situation, a foster/residential setting, or any other setting, including on the street by a person unknown to the child. The abuser may be an adult, an adolescent, or another child, provided the child is four years older than the victim” (National Resource Center on Child Sexual Abuse, 1992).
2. Sexual Activity – may be violent or non-violent, touching or non-touching, and is an exploitation of a child’s vulnerability and powerlessness. It involves children in sexual behaviors for which they are not personally, socially, and developmentally ready.
3. Sexual Misconduct – inappropriate behavior relating to or involving a sexual nature.
4. Child – For purposes of this policy, the terms “child” or “children” include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years.

C. SCREENING PROCEDURES

1. Written Application

- All new job applicants for paid positions, full or part time, and all volunteers shall be required to complete a written application form. This application form will include the following (at a minimum):
 - Personal contact information
 - The name, address, and phone number of at least two references who have worked with this individual in a setting with children.
 - Consent to allow church personnel to contact these references. All application forms and related information will be kept confidential.
 - The following question must be answered. “Has a lawsuit, claim, charge, arrest, been made against you for sexual misconduct, abuse, or molestation?”

2. Background Checks (No Exceptions)

- All paid staff, part time or full time, regardless of their job description, must consent to a national criminal background check and a statewide criminal or statewide sexual offender background check.
- All volunteers that have more than incidental contact with minors and work within our Children's Ministries or Youth Group must consent to a national criminal background check and a statewide criminal or statewide sexual offender background check.
- **BEING PREVIOUSLY BACKGROUND CHECKED FOR WORK OR OTHER VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES WILL NOT EXCLUDE VOLUNTEERS FROM BEING BACKGROUND CHECKED.**
- Such a check will be run before employment or volunteer work will commence. Results of this background check will be shared with the potential employee/volunteer. In the rare case that the information in the background check is challenged by the applicant, the Senior Pastor and Management Team (Elders) shall make the final determination as to what information will be considered in the decision process.
- No applicant or volunteer ever convicted of a sexual related crime is eligible for service in a position with direct relation to children.
- The Children's Minister or Executive Minister will securely maintain all background check records.

3. Personal Interview

- Upon completion of the application, a face-to-face interview may be scheduled with the applicant to discuss his/her suitability for the position.

D. SUPERVISION PROCEDURES

1. Two Adult Rule: Two adults must share supervisory responsibilities of children at all times. A qualified, responsible teenager not related to the other volunteer may be substituted for one adult if necessary. In cases where an adult has a legitimate reason to be alone with a child (i.e., counseling, visitation), all workers shall obtain the consent of the child's parent or guardian prior to being alone with the child. This rule extends to phone transactions with minors. Anyone working with minors will limit their phone transactions with minors to basic information about events or shall include a third party in the texts.
2. A children's ministry leader, or designated _____ Church leader, will make random checks on all classrooms on a regular basis.
3. No volunteer who wishes to work with children or youth shall be permitted to do so until having attended _____ Church at least 6 times in a 6-month period. Exceptions to this rule can only be made by the Senior Pastor and/or the Management Team (Elders).
4. Children elementary age and younger must wear name badges and/or be signed in and out of church supervision.

5. There must be at least one adult (age 18 or older) present with teenage volunteers.
6. Any supervisor is responsible to address suspicious behavior or any behavior that may be contrary to church policy and to document and report such occurrences to the proper authorities.
7. Children five years of age and younger shall utilize a classroom bathroom if available. If a classroom bathroom is not available, workers shall escort a group of children to the hallway bathroom. They shall always go in a group, never taking a child to the bathroom alone. The workers shall check the bathroom first to make sure that it is empty, then allow the children inside. The workers shall then remain outside the bathroom door and escort the children back to the classroom. If a child is taking longer than seems necessary, the worker shall open the bathroom door and call the child's name. If a child requires assistance, the workers shall prop open the bathroom door and leave the stall door open as he/she assists the child.
 - For children over the age of five, at least one adult male shall take boys to the restroom and at least one adult female shall take girls. The worker shall check the bathroom first to make sure that the bathroom is empty, then allow the children inside. The worker shall then remain outside the bathroom door and escort the children back to the classroom.
 - For the protection of all, workers shall never be alone with a child in a bathroom with the door closed and never be in a closed bathroom stall with a child. Parents are strongly encouraged to have their children visit the bathroom prior to each class.
8. It is the policy of _____ Church to not administer either prescription or non-prescription medications to the children under our care. Medications should be administered by a parent at home. Exceptions to the medications policy may be granted to parents of children with potentially life-threatening conditions (such as asthma or severe allergic reactions). Parents of such children shall address their situation with the _____ Church Children's Minister to develop a plan of action. For off-site (or overnight) events, the team leader for the event shall be responsible for administering of medications per parental instructions.
9. It is the policy of _____ Church to not allow any child who has had a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea within the preceding 24 hours into children's classrooms.
10. It is the policy of _____ Church to not administer corporal punishment, even if parents have suggested or given permission for it. There shall be no spanking, grabbing, hitting, or other physical discipline of children. Workers shall consult with the _____ Church Children's Minister if assistance is needed with disciplinary issues.
11. In the event that a child or youth is injured while under our care, the following steps shall be followed:

- For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide First Aid (Band-Aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the child's parent or guardian of the injury at the time the child is picked up from our care.
- For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple First Aid, the parent and/or guardian will immediately be summoned in addition to the children's worker's supervisor. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called.
- Once the child has received appropriate medical attention, an incident report will be completed in the case of injuries requiring treatment by a medical professional.

E. REPORTING PROCEDURES

1. All allegations must be taken seriously.
2. All allegations shall be reported to the most senior staff or volunteer available and not directly involved in the allegation as immediately as possible.
3. For instances occurring at church functions the most senior staff or leader available, and not directly involved in the allegation, will notify the parents or legal guardian. For instances occurring outside church functions, the church will comply with the mandatory legal reporting requirements.
4. All situations will be handled forthrightly with due respect for privacy and confidentiality.
5. Full cooperation will be given to civil authorities when applicable.
6. No accused individual will be addressed by anyone other than the established authorities and/or the most senior church staff or volunteer available and not directly involved in the allegation until the safety of the child or victim is secured.
7. No victim involved in an allegation or anyone responsible for reporting an allegation will be retaliated against.
8. All staff and volunteers are required to report any signs or evidence of physical or sexual abuse to the most senior church staff or leader available and not directly involved in the allegation.
9. The church must also make reports to the proper law enforcement authority on a timely basis as required by local, state, or federal statute.

F. RESPONSE PROCEDURES

1. All allegations will be investigated expeditiously.
2. Any accused worker will be relieved temporarily of his or her duties until the investigation is completed.
3. All details, interviews, and information will remain confidential to those legitimately involved in the investigation. Any individual or group responsible for a breach in this confidentiality is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
4. Anyone who presents themselves or is presented to the church as a victim of sexual abuse, misconduct or molestation, must be:

5. Offered counseling by a qualified counselor not in any way connected to the church.
6. Given the opportunity to present his/her side of the allegation to a representative of the church in a non-threatening and confidential environment.
7. Anyone accused of an act or acts of sexual abuse, misconduct, or molestation, must be:
8. Given the opportunity to present his/her side of the allegation to a representative of the church in a non-threatening and confidential environment.
9. The Senior Pastor and the Management Team (Elders) must decide together what course of action needs to be taken after reviewing the facts of the case as reported by the victim and the accused. Responses can include any of the following:
 10. Report the incident/s to the proper law enforcement authority.
 11. Report the incident/s to the insurance company.
 12. Church disciplinary action on the accused.
 13. In all cases, the goal of this process must be to promote the safety of all children, repentance and restoration for the perpetrator, protection for any falsely accused individual and maximum care and support for any victim.

_____ **CHURCH KIDS WORKER APPLICATION FORM**

Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____
Street City, State, Zip

Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth (City, State): _____

Marital Status: _____ SSN: _____

How long attended _____ Church?

Do you attend regularly (3 more services a month)? Yes ___ No ___

Have you been baptized by immersion? Yes ___ No ___

Have you ever been convicted or plead guilty before a court of any federal, state, or municipal criminal offense? (Excluding minor traffic violations) Yes ___ No ___
If Yes, please explain: _____

Have you ever received deferred adjudication or similar disposition for any federal, state or municipal criminal offense? Yes ___ No ___
If Yes, please explain: _____

Have you ever received probation or community supervision for any federal, state or municipal criminal offense? Yes ___ No ___
If Yes, please explain: _____

As of the date of this form, do you have any pending criminal charges against you?
Yes ___ No ___
If Yes, please explain: _____

Have you ever been subject to any disciplinary action (including discharge) or investigation by a church, religious or other organization or by an employer?
Yes ___ No ___ If Yes, please explain:

Do you have any drug, alcohol or substance abuse problems? Yes ___ No ___
If Yes, please explain: _____

DISCLOSURE: The responses I have provided in completing this application form are complete, truthful and accurate. I hereby authorize _____ Christian Church

to make inquiries concerning me in connection with evaluating the information I have provided on this form (to include a background check). In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this application form by the Church, I hereby release _____ Christian Church and their directors, employees, agents, representatives and any other person or organization that may release information concerning me from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me or my family on account of inquiries concerning my background and any disclosures of information concerning me to _____ Christian Church. I waive any right that I may have to inspect any information provided about me as a result of this application process. I understand that my service with the church shall be volunteer service. In addition, my volunteer services shall be at-will and the church shall be entitled to terminate my volunteer services at any time. I understand and agree that I am not an employee of the church and that I have no expectation of future employment. As a volunteer, I have no entitlement to or expectation of compensation, health insurance or other employee benefits, or unemployment or worker's compensation insurance benefits. I affirm that I will strictly comply with all policies and procedures of _____ Christian Church. If at any time I find that for any reason I am unable to support the vision, policies, procedures or doctrine of this church, I will resign my volunteer position. I understand and agree that failure by me to abide by such policies and procedures may result in my immediate dismissal at the discretion of the church. I will report any known or suspected child abuse or other violation of _____ Christian Church policy to a member of the church staff, or a designated authority.

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE ABOVE DISCLOSURE AND UNDERSTAND THE CONTENTS OF IT.

Name of Applicant (Printed): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

*On the day of the incident, this report must be completed and submitted to the _____ Church Children's Minister or a senior staff member.

Name of Child:

Nature of Incident:

Place of Incident:

Date & Time of Incident:

Witnesses:

Treatment:

Documented by:

Documenter's serving capacity/role at time of incident:

Date Documented:

Parent Signature:

Date Signed by Parent:
