

1999

To each United Methodist Church in the East Ohio Conference

Dear Friends:

*“People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, ‘Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.’ And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.” (Mark 10:13-16, NRSV)*

Our Lord placed sincere value on children and the example of faith they provide for us. He was also concerned about their vulnerability. The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church state that “children must be protected from economic, physical and sexual exploitation and abuse.”

In response to guidelines set by the General Conference of The UMC at their meeting in April 1996 (copy following), our East Ohio Conference bishop and his Cabinet appointed a task group to develop guidelines and a sample policy for reducing the risk of child abuse in the local church.

The task group’s goal was to create a sample which could be used as a framework by all churches in the conference to develop their own policy and procedures. The task group used the collective experience of the group and resources of the conference, other conferences, and several local churches to develop the sample while working with the conference attorneys and insurance companies, as well as children service agencies, and national experts on the subject of reducing the risk of child abuse in the church.

Enclosed you will find this sample policy and procedures, as well as resource materials, to help you develop a policy and procedures for your local church. This sample was written to be used as a resource by a wide range of churches. Options are included to help you tailor the sample to your own situation. ***It is very important that you carefully consider the special circumstances of your local church and prayerfully consider the issues around child/youth protection as you develop your own policy and procedures.*** Consultation with the leaders of your children/youth ministries is instrumental for success in reducing the risk. ***It is essential that you develop a policy and supporting procedures that can and will be followed.*** After developing your policy, please have it reviewed by your own attorney and insurance agency.

*“Currently, no congregation can afford, either financially, ethically, or morally, to fail to implement strategies for the reduction and prevention of child sexual abuse. We, as Christians, are not called to discontinue our congregation’s ministries with children and youth. We are called to engage in these ministries with great rejoicing and with the knowledge that we are making every effort to provide ministry to our children and youth in ways that assure their safety while they grow in faith.”*  
*(Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church, Joy Thornburg Melton, Discipleship Resources, Nashville, TN. p. 21)*

In Christ’s love,

The Child Protection Policy Task Group

Ms. Robin Kilbride	Dr. Dennis Marikis	Ms. Toni McKee
Rev. Janet Zimmerman	Mrs. Evie Althouse	Ms. Brenda Hembury
Rev. Dr. Judith Olin	Rev. Ed Fashbaugh	Mr. William Newenhisen
Rev. Dr. John Hardman	Rev. Pamela Monteith	Rev. Paul White

## **RESOURCE PACKET**

### **HOW TO GET STARTED**

### **SAMPLE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR LOCAL CHURCHES**

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### **HOW TO GET STARTED**

Present a proposal showing the need to form a task force to do further research on this issue to your administrative board or council. This governing board should accept the responsibility of choosing members for this task force. Because this could be a time consuming responsibility, an existing committee should not be asked to develop your church's policy and procedures.

The members of this task force could include the pastor, a representative from your pastor/staff parish, trustees and education committees, and other persons who work with the children and youth in your church. This task force will need to meet regularly.

While child protection is a very important issue, many people within your congregation may not be aware of the need to develop a policy and supporting procedures for your church. Some educating of individuals and the congregation as a whole may be needed. There are many resources to assist you in this educational process. A list of these resources can be found in the Resource Section of this document. The Child Protection Policy Task Group especially recommends *Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church*, *Reducing the Risk* (manual, guide and video), and *The Good Shepherd*.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OUTLINE**

The purpose of the task force should be to:

- educate yourselves on the issues of child abuse and protection
- evaluate the current practices of your church related to the care and supervision of children and youth
- become advocates for why a child protection policy and procedures are needed at your church
- continue educating the congregation for the need for a policy and procedures
- develop a proposed policy and procedures for your church after studying the enclosed sample and other resources
- review your proposed policy and procedures with affected parties -- education committee, teachers, youth leaders, paid and volunteer staff, an attorney, your insurance carrier, trustees, etc., and make any necessary revisions
- present the policy and procedures to your administrative board or council or other governing board for approval
- request that the governing board choose an implementation individual or committee who will administer the policy, assess its effectiveness, and raise awareness of the need to make any revisions of the policy and procedures as needed

- set a time table for your work

**SAMPLE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY  
AND PROCEDURES FOR LOCAL CHURCHES**

<p><i>Child Protection Policy for the East End of London 1999</i></p> <p><b>CHILD PROTECTION POLICY COVER SHEET</b></p>
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**NAME OF**

<p><i>This cover sheet was designed to provide a resource of key persons which could be helpful in reporting a suspected incident. This information should be readily available and updated regularly.</i></p>
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**CHURCH**

**STREET ADDRESS**

**PHONE NUMBER**     

**EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS:**

**Pastor in charge**     

**Others**

**NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE OF LOCAL CHURCH ATTORNEY:**

**NAME & PHONE NUMBER OF DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT:**

**EAST OHIO CONFERENCE 1-800-831-3972 or 330-499-3972**

**NAME OF LOCAL CHURCH INSURER**

**AGENT NAME, PHONE NUMBER**

**COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES PHONE NUMBER**

**COUNTY DEPT. OF HUMAN SERVICES PHONE NUMBER**

**LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY PHONE NUMBER**

**DESIGNATED MEDIA SPOKESPERSON**

**(Information last updated on \_\_\_\_\_)**

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## **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

( NAME OF CHURCH )  
( NAME OF CITY ), OHIO

### 1. INTRODUCTION

“People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them ‘Let the children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly, I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it. And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.’” (Mark 10:13-16)

This incident from the ministry of Jesus speaks of the value our Lord placed on children and the example of faith that they provide for the rest of us. As followers of Jesus, we understand that children/youth are inherently valuable members of Christ’s community.

Jesus highlighted not only the faith and openness of children, but also their vulnerability. This vulnerability puts children at risk, but it also places them close to God. Their dependence on God may be what Jesus was trying to get his disciples to see as a model for their own faith. This vulnerability and

dependence makes the protection and support of the community of faith even more important. Jesus was teaching that, within the community of believers, there must be protection for each of us in our dependence on God and on each other. As followers of Christ, we resolve to protect children in their vulnerability and also to learn from them as we all grow in the faith.

Our culture appears to be experiencing an increase in the incidence of child abuse and neglect. As much as we do not like to think about abusive and hurtful things happening in the church, it is clear that it is our duty as the Church to guard and protect the children, youth, church staff and volunteers who participate in our ministries.

The General Conference of The United Methodist Church, in April 1996, adopted a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of child sexual abuse in the church. The adopted resolution includes the following statement:

“Our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection to the little ones, the children. The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church state that ‘. . . children must be protected from economic, physical and sexual exploitation, and abuse.’

Tragically, churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, exploitation and ritual abuse . . . occur in churches, both large and small, urban and

rural. The problem cuts across all economic, cultural and racial lines. It is real, and it appears to be increasing. Most annual conferences can cite specific incidents of child sexual abuse and exploitation in their churches. Virtually every congregation has among its members adult survivors of early sexual trauma.

Such incidents are devastating to all who are involved: the child, the family, the local church and its leaders. Increasingly, churches are torn apart by the legal, emotional, and monetary consequences of litigation following allegations of abuse.

God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from sexual and ritual abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong.” (From *The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church -- 1996*. pp. 384-386.) Since the 1996 General Conference, every annual conference in the U.S. has reported at least one incident of child abuse.

Thus, in covenant with all United Methodist congregations, we adopt this policy for the prevention of child abuse in our church.

## **II. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Child Protection Policy of the (*name of church*) is to;

1. provide procedure specifically designed to protect children, youth, church staff and volunteers associated with the ministries of the church.

2. establish appropriate ways of responding to alleged, reported, or suspected incidents of abuse.
3. be in a compassionate ministry with all affected persons -- the alleged victim, the alleged victim's family, the accused, the accused's family, and the church family.

We hereby resolve to put into practice the procedures set forth herein with the intent to;

1. safeguard the children/youth of our church from abuse and neglect.
2. respond to all allegations in a fair and compassionate manner.
3. protect church staff and volunteers from potential false allegations of abuse.
4. limit the extent of our church's legal risk and liability.
5. strengthen our Christian educational children/youth ministries.

## **PROCEDURES TO SUPPORT THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY**

### **I. DEFINITION OF ABUSE**

*It should be noted that the legal counsel for our Annual Conference recommended that we use Ohio law to define abuse. Using other definitions could cause your local church to be liable for acts which would not normally be covered by Ohio law. In other words, expanding the definition of abuse in your policy may also expand your liability.*

“Child abuse” is defined in accordance with current Ohio law. At the time this policy was being written/adopted, the current law in Ohio defined child abuse to consist of any of the following:

1. Engaging in any sexual activity with a child, as defined under Chapter 2907 of the Ohio Revised Code; or
2. Endangering a child, as defined in Section 2919.22 of the Ohio Revised Code\*\*; or
3. Denial, as a means of punishment, of proper necessary subsistence, education,

- medical care, or other care necessary to a child for the child's health; or
4. Use of restraint procedures on a child that cause injury or pain; or
  5. Administration of prescription drugs to a child without the written approval and ongoing supervision of a licensed physician; or
  6. Providing alcoholic beverages or controlled substances to a child; or
  7. Commission of any intentional act that results in any injury or death to a child; or
  8. Infliction of physical or mental injury that threatens to harm a child's health, welfare, or safety.

\*\* In its present form, this law defines "child endangerment" to include any of the following: (1) abuse; or (2) torture or cruel abuse; or (3) corporal punishment or other physical discipline (e.g., such as spankings) or prolonged cruel restraint, which is excessive under the circumstances, and which could likely physically injure the child; or (4) repeated, uncalled-for discipline which, if continued, would seriously impair the child's mental health or development; or (5) involving the child in any obscene, sexually-oriented, or nudity-oriented activity or conduct.

## **II. SELECTION AND SCREENING OF CHURCH STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

Although our Christian concern for children/youth leads us to be saddened when any form of child abuse takes place anywhere, our major policy need is to be certain that abuse does not occur within the framework of any (Name of Church) program or ministry with children/youth. This policy is intended to help our congregation make (Name of Church) a truly safe and caring place.

In an effort to create a safe environment within our church, each church staff person and volunteer who works with the church's children/youth programs either regularly or occasionally, on or beyond the church grounds, will be screened and will be trained on child protection issues.

The procedure for selecting and screening is as follows (The Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee may set additional screening, such as a police background check, and performance standards for paid staff):

1. Each person being considered to work with children/youth in any church

program, whether as a volunteer or paid staff person, shall fill out an application form. (See attached form on pages 12-14).

2. Before placing the applicant in a position of responsibility, the pastor, church staff member, or lay person responsible for the ministry will review the written application and determine if the applicant will be interviewed. Indications that an interview must take place include:
  1. The person is a newcomer to (Name of Church) and/or (Name of City).
  2. The person wants to work alone.
  3. The person has indicated that they have been charged with a crime against children or youth. (Persons who have been previously convicted or plead guilty or no contest to a crime against children or youth will not be placed in a position involving access to children or youth.)
  4. Upon checking references, issues are raised which require clarification.

Interviews will follow the interview guidelines provided as an attachment to this policy (see pages 15-16) and be conducted by the pastor, church staff member or layperson responsible for the ministry or through the use of a designated person(s).

The results of the interview, especially when sensitive areas have been discussed, should be kept confidential and only disclosed to those persons requiring this information in order to make a decision as to whether the applicant should be accepted as a volunteer.

3. Whether or not an interview is conducted, the pastor, church staff member or lay person responsible for the ministry will contact the three references provided on the application form. A written record of such contact will be retained with the application form. (See attached form on page 17.)
4. Each person applying to work with children and/or youth must be fingerprinted and shall authorize the church to conduct a criminal records check. For persons who have lived in Ohio for the past five years, an Ohio background check will be conducted. For persons who have not lived in Ohio for the past five years, an FBI background check will be conducted. (See authorization form on page 22.)
5. Before beginning work with either children or youth, each volunteer will sign a

statement that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by pages 1-10 of the church's Child Protection Policy and Procedures. (Such a statement is a part of the application form.)

In the unfortunate situation where it has been determined that an applicant should not work with children/youth, the church needs to handle such a decision in a confidential manner which is sensitive to that person.

*It is important that the procedures you adopt are followed. The following section is offered as a guideline from which to work. Consult with your church attorney and insurance carrier as to what procedures and exceptions apply at your church.*

### **III. SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

*"Adult" is defined in this document as a person at least 18 years of age and at least five years older than those being supervised.*

While recognizing the important role of youth volunteers in children/youth ministries, all activities involving children and youth will be supervised by at least one person who is at least 18 years of age and at least five year older than those who they are supervising.

#### **Supervision of Classroom Activities**

It is preferable that at least two adults be present for all classroom activities involving children and youth. When two adults are not available, a designated person will periodically check the rooms and be aware of the children/youth's whereabouts if they leave the classroom area. Even

when two adults are available per classroom, it is advisable to have periodic classroom checks. While recognizing the important role of youth volunteers in children/youth ministries, in an effort to assure a safe environment, all activities involving children and youth will be supervised by at least one person who is at least 18 years of age and at least five years older than those whom they are supervising.

### **Open Door Policy**

Parents, volunteers, or staff of the church may visit and observe the program at any time.

### **Sign-In/Sign-Out Procedure**

Persons responsible for children who are infant through third grade will sign in their child and indicate the pre-authorized person(s) to whom the child may be signed out for both Sunday school and other children's activities. No child should ever be left unattended.

### **Record Retention**

All children/youth activities should have a written record of the names of participants and supervisors. Records shall be kept for three years.

### **Supervision of Non-Classroom Activities**

With the exception of the circumstances identified under Special Rules for Supervision of Specific Activities, at least two adults will be present for all non-classroom activities involving children/youth.

### **Special Rules for Supervision of Specific Activities**

2. Youth Counseling: In instances of youth counseling where circumstances dictate that counseling is most effective on a one-on-one basis, a church staff person or volunteer may meet individually with a child or youth with the awareness and previous consent of that individual's parent or legal guardian. Exceptions to consent may be made for emergencies.
  
2. Dismissal from Group Events: In group events, it may be inevitable that one child or youth's transportation from the event arrives after all other children/youth's transportation has arrived. In those circumstances, a child/youth may unavoidably be in the individual presence of an adult. Because this circumstance may be simply unavoidable, the general rule which requires the presence of two adults is suspended and the adult is responsible for exercising his/her best judgement for the child or youth's

well-being.

### **Trip and Retreat Supervision**

There shall be at least two adults present for all trips, retreats, and other times children/youth gather at or away from the church building. (Please note that at least three adults are preferable so that in the event of an emergency, there will be adequate supervision.)

There shall be at least one adult of each gender present at co-ed overnight events. At single gender overnight events, at least one of the two or more adults present will be of the same gender as the children/youth.

In situations where two adults are not available per room where children/youth are staying overnight, then no adult should stay alone in a specific room with the children/youth. In those circumstances where adults are not staying in the rooms with children/youth, special measures should be taken to assure the children/youth's safety and supervision, such as adult hall monitors, "taping" doors, and periodic room checks by two adults of the same gender as those being checked. Parents should be made aware of housing accommodations.

Permission slips including permission for emergency medical care shall be carried by the person in charge of each trip and/or retreat. (See form on page 18.)

Rules for providing transportation for church events:

- Driver must be known to the designated leader of the event;
- Driver must be at least 21 years old;
- Driver must have a valid state driver's license for the vehicle being operated;
- Driver must have proof of insurance;
- Driver must be accompanied by at least two children or youth; and
- Driver must have read and signed an acknowledgment form indicating that the policy has been read and will be followed. (See form on page 11.)



#### IV. RESPONSE BY CHURCH WORKERS TO INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS

In order to assure proper attention was given to an injury or accident, an incident report must be completed by the adult supervisor with 24 hours of the incident whenever a child/youth is injured. (See attached form on page 19.)

#### V. RESPONSE BY CHURCH WORKERS TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

As caring Christians, we are committed to protect and advocate for children/youth participating in the life of the church. The Church is entrusted to provide an emotionally safe, spiritually grounded, healthy environment for children, youth, and adults in which they are protected from abuse. It is our legal and moral responsibility to report suspected abuse whenever it comes to our attention regardless of where that abuse takes place. We shall report suspected abuse to stop potentially existing abuse and to prevent further abuse. To report abuse is to witness to the world of the love and justice of God. Reporting abuse is a form of ministering to the needs of those crying out for help.

If abuse occurs, it is our intention to act as an advocate for all affected persons, providing support, information, assistance and intervention. We seek to provide a supportive atmosphere, offering both objectivity and empathy as we seek to create a climate in which healing can take place.

If abuse is suspected by, observed by or disclosed to a volunteer and/or paid staff member of the church, that person shall report the incident immediately to the pastor. (If the accused is the pastor, see information below.) Be prepared to do the following:

*Please note: many steps should be done simultaneously.*

- **IMMEDIATELY** notify the proper authorities (children services board, the county department of human services exercising the children services function, or a local law enforcement agency in the county in which the child resides or in which the suspected abuse occurred.) This is a requirement of the law. (Reference section 2151.421 of The Ohio Revised Code.) Do not attempt an investigation. This should be left to professionals who are familiar with these cases.
- Simultaneously notify the parents of the victim and take whatever steps are necessary to assure the safety of the child/youth until the parent(s) arrive. It is important to emphasize that the proper authorities must be notified even if the parent(s) does not wish the incident to be reported.
- Note: If one or both of the parents is the alleged abuser, contact the proper authorities. Follow their advise about notification of the parents.

- Take any allegations seriously and reach out to the victim and the victim's family. Showing care and support help to prevent further hurt. Extend whatever pastoral resources are needed. Remember that the care and safety of the victim is the first priority. Respond in a positive and supportive manner to the alleged victim and the victim's family.
- After having reported the suspected abuse to the proper authorities, the incident is to be reported immediately to the church's attorney, the church's insurance company, and the district superintendent. The district superintendent will report the allegation to the bishop's office. Do not try to handle this without professional assistance. If the accused is a clergy member of an annual conference, local pastor, or diaconal minister, provisions of Paragraph 358 and Paragraphs 2623-2629 of *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church* must be followed.
- A written report of the basic information shall be kept to ensure on-going ministry to, and advocacy for, victims and others involved. A form for this purpose shall be available in the church office. (See attached form on pages 20-21.) The report shall be brief and contain only factual information relevant to the situation. It shall be filed in a secure place in order to ensure confidentiality. It shall be written in ink or typed to prevent it from being changed. The church must also file a copy of the report with the bishop's office of the East Ohio Conference, where it shall remain confidential.
- Immediately, yet with dignity and respect for the sacred worth of the accused, remove the accused from further involvement with children and/or youth.
- Once the proper authorities have been contacted and the safety of the child or youth is secured, the pastor or other designated person may tell the accused that a report has been made. If the accused is a volunteer or paid staff of the church, that person shall be relieved temporarily of his or her duties until the investigation is finished. If the accused is a paid staff person of the church, arrangements should be made to either maintain or suspend his or her income until the allegations are cleared or substantiated.
- Any contact with the media should be handled by a pre-determined spokesperson. Care will be taken to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all involved. The spokesperson should generally convey that the matter is under investigation and any comments made prior to the conclusion of the investigation would be premature.

## **VI. EDUCATION OF PERSONS WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

The church shall provide regularly scheduled training focused on issues of child protection for those working with children and youth. Attendance at this training or a district or conference sponsored training session shall be required of all adults and youth helpers who will have direct contact with children or youth in the church's ministry.

The training may include:

3. The definition and recognition of abuse
4. The church's policies on reporting abuse and appropriate forms.
5. The purposes of the policy as protection for children/youth and for church staff/volunteer workers.
6. The meaning and importance of confidentiality.
7. The maintenance of a positive learning classroom environment, including appropriate discipline and age-level characteristics.
8. The appropriate behavior for teachers and leaders.

Proposed (Date)

Approved by the Administrative Board/Council (Date)

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT BY PERSONS DESIGNATED TO PROVIDE  
TRANSPORTATION TO OR FROM CHURCH EVENTS FOR (NAME OF CHURCH)**

Are you at least 21 years old? \_\_\_\_\_ Do you have a valid driver's license?

Driver's License Number:

Insurance Company \_\_\_\_\_ Policy Number:

As required by (NAME OF CHURCH) Child Protection Policy and Procedures, I acknowledge that I have read and will abide by pages \*\*\*\*\* of said policy.

Signature of driver

Date

Print the following:

Full name

Address

Phone numbers

( NAME OF CHURCH )  
**APPLICATION TO WORK/VOLUNTEER  
WITH CHILDREN AND/OR YOUTH**

All three pages of this application are to be completed by all persons (volunteer or compensated) who desire to work with children or youth in our church's ministries. This application form is being used to help the church provide a safe and secure environment for those children and youth who participate in our programs and for those who work with them.

**PERSONAL**

Date

Name

Last

First

Middle

Former Name (if applicable)

Present Address

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip

Home phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Other phone numbers (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you lived at the above address?

If less than one year, provide all previous addresses for the past five years:

Please indicate the type of youth or children's work you prefer

Why do you want to serve in this position?

Please indicate the date you would be available to begin

What is the minimum length of commitment you can make?

Our church has an open door policy which means that a parent, volunteer, or church staff can visit/observe at anytime. Are you comfortable with this atmosphere?

Our church encourages the use of two teacher/leaders for all children/youth activities. Are you comfortable with team teaching?

Have you ever been charged with, convicted of, or pleaded guilty or no contest to a crime against children or other persons?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes (If yes, please explain -- attach a separate page, if necessary)

\_\_\_\_\_ No

Have you ever committed any act of child abuse or sexual misconduct against a minor?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes (explain)      \_\_\_\_\_ No

### **CHURCH HISTORY AND PRIOR CHILD/YOUTH WORK**

How long have you been attending (Name of Church)

List (names and addresses) other churches you have attended regularly during the past five years:

\_\_\_\_\_ List all previous church work involving children/youth (list each church's name and address, type of work performed, and dates)

List all previous non-church work involving children/youth (list each organization's name and address, type of work performed, and dates)

—

List any gifts, callings, training, education, or other factors that have prepared you for working with children or youth:

**REFERENCES**

Please list three persons who have known you for at least three years and who are familiar with your character, particularly as it relates to supervision of children and youth. None of the references may be a relative.

1. Name

Address

Daytime phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Length  
of time you have know reference \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to  
reference

2. Name

Address

Daytime phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Length  
of time you have know reference \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to  
reference

3. Name

Address

Daytime phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Length  
of time you have know reference \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to  
reference

**APPLICANT’S AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE**

The information contained in this application is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references or churches listed in this application to give you any information (including opinions) that they may have regarding my character and fitness for work with children or youth. In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this application by (Name of Church), I hereby release any individual, church, youth organization, charity, employer, reference, or any other person or organization, including record custodians, both collectively and individually, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me, my heirs, or family on account of compliance or any attempts to comply, with this authorization.

Should my application be accepted, I agree to abide by pages \*\*\*\*\* of the (Name of Church) Child Protection Policy and Procedures and will live by the understanding that, as a person of authority, it is my responsibility to avoid inappropriate behavior with any children or youth in my care.

I further state that **I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE FOREGOING AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE AND KNOW THE CONTENTS THEREOF AND I SIGN IT AS MY OWN FREE ACT.** This is a legally binding agreement which I have read and understand.

Applicant's signature

Date

## **INTERVIEW GUIDELINES**

Goals of the interview:

1. Work from the application form and fill in any gaps in the application form.
2. Open paths for further discussion on the part of the applicant.
3. Observe how the applicant conducts self in the process.
4. Keep a written record of the applicant's responses to the interview questions.

In conducting an interview, the interviewer should be aware when "red flags" are raised concerning the applicant. These "flags" are indicators of issues which must be explored further to be assured that all information is collected concerning a prospective employee/volunteer. Some of these "flags" include:

### **Many addresses or churches attended over a short period of time.**

This could indicate that a person is trying to be anonymous. But it could also indicate that they are a college student who moved a lot to keep rent low.

### **Wants to work with only one age group.**

If someone would like to work with only one specific age group, it could indicate that person has targeted that age group for molestation. Or it could mean that is the age group for which they were trained and experience has shown that they do not work as well with other ages. Also be aware of those who seem overly committed to one age group. For example, someone who simultaneously leads a scout troop, coaches little league, serves as a Big Brother and now wants to teach Sunday school may be neglecting their own age appropriate peer relationships in order to cultivate potential victims.

### **Does not want/need/like close supervision.**

The interview may indicate that the person does not like to be closely supervised. This might raise questions about motivation for applying for this work.

The interviewer needs to be able to explore issues as they arise during the interview and depart from the set of prepared questions to do so. It is helpful, therefore, if interviewers prepare ahead of time for the interview by:

1. reading the application form

2. noting areas for exploration

### **SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. Why are you interested in being associated with our church?
2. How would you describe yourself?
3. When you heard about this position, what appealed to you the most?
4. What specific skills do you bring to this position?
5. With what age group and sex do you prefer to work? Why? Please give examples of your work with this age group.
6. If you are trained for a certain age group, are you willing to work with other age groups or sex?
7. What kinds of programs or activities would you be willing to lead, supervise or conduct? If trained would you be willing to conduct other activities?
8. What do you feel are chief indicators of a successful program or activity?
9. Give a specific example of how you overcame a difficulty in job, school or family.
10. Give an example of how you overcame a problem with a youngster other than your own. How were you disciplined as a child? How would/do you discipline?
11. Under what supervision style do you work best?
12. In what types of activities or recreation do you participate?
13. What were your favorite subjects in school?
14. What would you like to tell us that hasn't been covered?
15. What questions do you have about our congregation?
16. Other questions to raise regarding information given on the information form?

One might conclude the interview with one or two hypothetical situations which are typical in your church and

ask the applicant how they would respond in that situation.

**WRITTEN RECORD OF CONTACT WITH A REFERENCE OF AN APPLICANT  
FOR CHILDREN/YOUTH WORK**

(COMPLETE ONE FORM FOR EACH REFERENCE CONTACTED)

CONFIDENTIAL

1. Name of applicant
2. Individual, church or organization contacted (if a church or organization, identify both the church or organization and minister or person contacted)
3. Date(s) and time(s) of contact(s)
4. Person contacting the reference
5. Method of contact (e.g. telephone, personal conversation, letter [please attach])
6. Summary of conversation (summarize the reference's remarks concerning the applicant's fitness and suitability for youth or children's work)

Your signature

Position \_\_\_\_\_ Date

( NAME OF CHURCH ) **EVENT PERMISSION SLIP**

To Whom It May Concern:

\_\_\_\_\_ has my permission to go with the

(name of child/youth)

\_\_\_\_\_ on the following event

(name of group)

(event)

at \_\_\_\_\_ on

(location of event)

(date of event)

(Parent/Guardian Signature and date signed)

Phone number in case of emergency:

Where parent(s)/guardian may be reached during the event:

Alternate contact in case parent(s)/guardian cannot be reached:

Medical/Health Information

Allergies, medication, hay fever, insect bites, asthma, food, other:

Other pertinent health history information:

Does your child/youth have any conditions that would prevent him/her from fully participating in this program? If yes, please explain: (specific activities/foods to avoid)

List any medication to be taken during the event which will be kept by the leaders during the event:

Preferred Doctor \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Dentist \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Eye Doctor \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Hospital \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**EMERGENCY MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION**

I give my consent for emergency medical treatment by a certified first aider. In the event that additional treatment is needed, the staff of the Emergency Room of the hospital listed above, or one closest to the event location, has my permission to treat my child/youth

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ (Date) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (home) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ (Work) ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Hospitalization Plan and Group # \_\_\_\_\_

(                     **NAME OF CHURCH**                     )

### **INCIDENT REPORT**

This form is to be completed by the adult supervisor whenever an incident (for example: injury, accident, etc.) occurs. A copy is then to be given to the child/youth's parent/guardian and the pastor. The church must also keep a copy of the completed form.

**Name of class or activity** \_\_\_\_\_ **Adult supervisor** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of injured child/youth** \_\_\_\_\_ **Birth date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Age** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parents/Legal Guardian** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_ **Home Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date and time of incident** \_\_\_\_\_

**Description of incident:**

1. Describe the incident (use the back of page if necessary):
2. Where in the facility did it happen?
3. What area of the child/youth's body was injured?
4. What was the child/youth doing when the incident happened?
5. How did the incident happen?
6. Give the names of adults supervising the child/youth at the time of the incident:
7. Give the name(s) of any other witnesses to the incident:
8. How did the child/youth respond after the incident:
9. Was first aid given or some other action taken? ( ) Yes ( ) No  
If yes, by whom? Describe:

10. Who notified the parent/guardian and when?

Signature of person completing the form

Date

( NAME OF CHURCH )  
**REPORT OF SUSPECTED INCIDENT OF CHILD/YOUTH ABUSE**

Name of person (paid or volunteer) observing or receiving disclosure of abuse:

Victim's name, age and date of birth

Date/location of initial conversation with or report from victim:

\_\_\_\_\_ Victim's  
statement (please give your detailed summary):

Notification of pastor (include pastor's name, date, time and summary of report)

Notification of victim's parent/guardian (include date, time, name of parent/guardian contacted, and summary)

(Page one of two page report)

Call to Children Services Board or County Human Services Department exercising children services function  
(include date, time, name of person contacted, and summary)

Call to local law enforcement agency (include date, time, name of person contacted and summary)

Other contacts (include date, time, name of person contacted and summary)

Signature of person making this report

Date

Print name:

(Page two of two page report)

**AUTHORIZATION AND REQUEST FOR A CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK  
(NAME OF CHURCH)**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby authorize \_\_\_\_\_ Church to request the \_\_\_\_\_ police/sheriff's department to release information regarding any record of charges or convictions contained in its files, or in any criminal file maintained on me, whether said file is a local, state, or national file, and including but not limited to accusations and convictions for crimes committed against minors, to the fullest extent permitted by state and federal law. I do release said police/sheriff's department from all liability that may result from any such disclosure made in response to this request.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Print applicant's full name:

Print all other names that have been used by applicant (if any):

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth:

Social Security number (if required by police/sheriff's department):

Driver's license number: \_\_\_\_\_ State issuing license:

License expiration date:

Request sent to:

Name:

Address:

Phone numbers:

<p><i>NOTE: Your local police/sheriff's department may have their own request form and prefer that you use it.</i></p>
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