

# *Child Protection Manual*

**Suggested Policies for  
Prevention, Intervention, Healing**



**The Michigan District, LCMS  
Revised February 2009**

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Winter 2009

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Ministry,

Several years ago, perhaps due to many events in the news, the District began receiving calls from churches and schools looking for assistance in developing child protection policies. Churches and schools wanted guidance to develop policies to prevent child abuse, while also receiving insight on how to respond should suspected cases arise.

In response to those inquiries, a Task Force was put together to develop this Child Protection Manual. It is meant to be adapted to your ministry setting, in whatever way you see fit, in order to provide for the safety of your children and guidance for your workers. This is a delicate area of ministry, but one that is vital for our children. No doubt your insurance carrier has requested you to have policies and procedures in place to protect children and the church in the event of legal actions. We pray the attached document is of help to you in meeting those needs.

This manual is available on our website ([www.michigandistrict.org](http://www.michigandistrict.org)) under "Resources" and "Education Office Forms". A CD can also be sent to you upon request. You may customize any of the forms in this manual to fit the needs of your church or school.

Our thanks to the members of the Task Force:

Ann Cooley, Director of Children's Ministry, Shepherd of the Lakes, Brighton  
Carol Smith, County Health Nurse, Washtenaw County  
Chris Stodola, Director of Children's Ministry, Redeemer, Grand Rapids  
Judy Williams, Ministry for Families with Young Children, Trinity, Clinton Twp.  
Rev. Peter Larsen, Ex. Administrator, Michigan District

If you have questions about this manual or matters concerning abuse prevention, call me at the District office or e-mail me at [bruce.braun@michigandistrict.org](mailto:bruce.braun@michigandistrict.org).

Blessings on all your ministries, especially to those "little ones who believe in Him".

Mr. Bruce Braun  
Superintendent of Schools  
Michigan District, LCMS

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## **PREAMBLE**

Showing the need for abuse-prevention policies.

Churches should be the safest place in the world for children. Jesus expressed his love for children and told of the dire judgment upon anyone who would harm a child. (Matthew 18:5-6)

The disturbing and traumatic rise of sexual and physical abuse of our children, youth and vulnerable adults has claimed the attention of every aspect of our society. The church must also be prepared so that sexual and physical misconduct does not take place within its programs. Organizations such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Little League have already developed guidelines to reduce their risk. If someone desires to prey on children, youth or vulnerable adults, he/she will look for an organization that does not screen or monitor its workers. One occurrence of sexual or physical misconduct can destroy the ministry of the church and reduce its effectiveness at reaching people with the message of Jesus Christ for years to come.

Without pro-active abuse prevention, the safety of our children is at risk. Visitors may not return if they notice safe-practice violations within our programs. We cannot be guaranteed our volunteers understand safe practices and feel trusted within their area of ministry.

With pro-active abuse prevention policies, we provide safe boundaries for all who are involved in ministry. We help volunteers know how to handle situations; we help parents feel comfortable; we help children feel loved and safe.

Since it is the determination of the Church to provide a Christian environment that is safe, we must commit ourselves to take every reasonable precaution to protect those entrusted to us. Ultimately, we will protect our children, our youth, our workers, our volunteers, and our church.

# STATE OF MICHIGAN CHILD PROTECTION LAW (excerpts)

## Act 238 of 1975

AN ACT to require the reporting of child abuse and neglect by certain persons; to permit the reporting of child abuse and neglect by all persons; to provide for the protection of children who are abused or neglected; to authorize limited detainment in protective custody; to authorize medical examinations; to prescribe the powers and duties of the state department of social services to prevent child abuse and neglect; to prescribe certain powers and duties of local law enforcement agencies; to safeguard and enhance the welfare of children and preserve family life; to provide for the appointment of legal counsel; to provide for the abrogation of privileged communications; to provide civil and criminal immunity for certain persons; to provide rules of evidence in certain cases; to provide for confidentiality of records; to provide for the expungement of certain records; to prescribe penalties; and to repeal certain acts and parts of acts.

**History:** 1975, Act 238, Eff. Oct. 1, 1975;--Am. 1988, Act 372, Eff. Mar. 30, 1989.

### **Section 722.622** – Definitions

**“Child”** means a person less than 18 years of age.

**“Child abuse”** means harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare by a parent, a legal guardian, or any other person responsible for the child's health or welfare, or by a teacher or teacher's aide, that occurs through non-accidental physical or mental injury; sexual abuse; sexual exploitation; or maltreatment.

**“Child neglect”** means harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare by a parent, legal guardian, or any other person responsible for the child's health or welfare that occurs through either of the following: (1) Negligent treatment, including the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, or medical care; (2) Placing a child at an unreasonable risk to the child's health or welfare by failure of the parent, legal guardian, or other person responsible for the child's health or welfare to intervene to eliminate that risk when that person is able to do so and has, or should have, knowledge of the risk.

**“Sexual abuse”** means engaging in sexual contact or sexual penetration as those terms are defined in section 520a of the Michigan penal code, 1931 PA 328, MCL 750.520a, with a child.

**“Sexual exploitation”** includes allowing, permitting, or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution, or allowing, permitting, encouraging, or engaging in the photographing, filming, or depicting of a child engaged in a listed sexual act as defined in section 145c of the Michigan penal code, 1931 PA 328, MCL 750.145c.

**Section 722.623 – Individual required to report child abuse or neglect; written report; transmitting report and results of investigation to prosecuting attorney or county family independence agency; pregnancy of or venereal disease in child less than 12 years of age.**

(1) An individual is required to report under this act as follows: A physician, dentist, physician's assistant, registered dental hygienist, medical examiner, nurse, person licensed to provide emergency medical care, audiologist, psychologist, marriage and family therapist, licensed professional counselor, certified social worker, social worker, social work technician, school administrator, school counselor or teacher, law enforcement officer, member of the clergy, or regulated child care provider who has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect shall make immediately, by telephone or otherwise, an oral report, or cause an oral report to be made, of the suspected child abuse or neglect to the department. Within 72 hours after making the oral report, the reporting person shall file a written report as required in this act. If the reporting person is a member of the staff of a hospital, agency, or school, the reporting person shall notify the person in charge of the hospital, agency, or school of his or her finding and that the report has been made, and shall make a copy of the written report available to the person in charge. A notification to the person in charge of a hospital, agency, or school does not relieve the member of the staff of the hospital, agency, or school of the obligation of reporting to the department as required by this section. One report from a hospital, agency, or school shall be considered adequate to meet the reporting requirement. A member of the staff of a hospital, agency, or school shall not be dismissed or otherwise penalized for making a report required by this act or for cooperating in an investigation

(2) The written report shall contain the name of the child and description of the abuse or neglect. If possible, the report shall contain the names and addresses of the child's parents, the child's guardian, the persons with whom the child resides, and the child's age. The report shall contain other information available to the reporting person that might establish the cause of the abuse or neglect, and the manner in which the abuse or neglect occurred.

**Section 722.624 – Persons permitted to report child abuse or neglect.**

In addition to those persons required to report child abuse or neglect under section 3, any person, including a child, who has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect may report the matter to the department or a law enforcement agency.

**Section 722.628 – Referring report or commencing investigation; informing parent or legal guardian of investigation; duties of department; assistance of and cooperation with law enforcement officials; procedures; proceedings by prosecuting attorney; cooperation of school or other institution; information as to disposition of report; exception to reporting requirement.**

A school or other institution shall cooperate with the department during an investigation of a report of child abuse or neglect. Cooperation includes allowing access to the child without parental consent if access is determined by the department to be necessary to complete the investigation or to prevent abuse or neglect of the child. However, the department shall notify the person responsible for the child's health or welfare about the

department's contact with the child at the time or as soon afterward as the person can be reached. The department may delay the notice if the notice would compromise the safety of the child or child's siblings or the integrity of the investigation, but only for the time 1 of those conditions exists.

If the department has contact with a child in a school, all of the following apply: (a) Before contact with the child, the department investigator shall review with the designated school staff person the department's responsibilities under this act and the investigation procedure; (b) After contact with the child, the department investigator shall meet with the designated school staff person and the child about the response the department will take as a result of contact with the child. The department may also meet with the designated school staff person without the child present and share additional information the investigator determines may be shared subject to the confidentiality provisions of this act; (c) Lack of cooperation by the school does not relieve or prevent the department from proceeding with its responsibilities under this act.

A child shall not be subjected to a search at a school that requires the child to remove his or her clothing to expose his buttocks or genitalia or her breasts, buttocks, or genitalia unless the department has obtained an order from a court of competent jurisdiction permitting such a search.

#### **Section 722.628c – Interview with child.**

During an investigation of suspected child abuse or neglect, the child reported to have been abused or neglected shall not be interviewed in the presence of an individual suspected to have perpetrated the abuse.

#### **Section 722.633 – Failure to report suspected child abuse or neglect; damages; violation as misdemeanor; unauthorized dissemination of information as misdemeanor; civil liability; maintaining report or record required to be expunged as misdemeanor; false report of child abuse or neglect.**

(1) A person who is required by this act to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect and who fails to do so is civilly liable for the damages proximately caused by the failure.

(2) A person who is required by this act to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect and who knowingly fails to do so is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for not more than 93 days or a fine of not more than \$500.00, or both.

(3) Except as provided in section 7, a person who disseminates, or who permits or encourages the dissemination of, information contained in the central registry and in reports and records made as provided in this act is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for not more than 93 days or a fine of not more than \$100.00, or both, and is civilly liable for the damages proximately caused by the dissemination.

(4) A person who willfully maintains a report or record required to be expunged under section 7 is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for not more than 93 days or a fine of not more than \$100.00, or both.

(5) A person who intentionally makes a false report of child abuse or neglect under this act knowing that the report is false is guilty of a crime as follows:

(a) If the child abuse or neglect reported would not constitute a crime or would constitute a misdemeanor if the report were true, the person is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for not more than 93 days or a fine of not more than \$100.00, or both.

(b) If the child abuse or neglect reported would constitute a felony if the report were true, the person is guilty of a felony punishable by the lesser of the following:

(i) The penalty for the child abuse or neglect falsely reported.

(ii) Imprisonment for not more than 4 years or a fine of not more than \$2,000.00, or both.

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# CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

The Michigan District-LCMS strongly encourages congregations to provide a safe environment for children in the church. Mandatory background checks **should be required** by congregations for people serving in ministries involving children. Congregations may wish to inquire with their insurance provider regarding the minimum level of check needed. Congregations should also develop a training program for new workers which provide staff development on acceptable practices and procedures to protect the safety of both children and workers.

There are three levels of background checks used by Michigan District congregations.

1. *Protect My Ministry* is recognized by the LCMS as a resource to assist congregations. The website and fee structure is included below.
2. *ICHAT* is a very minimal free tool used to assess State of Michigan Criminal Background for volunteers in some ministries.
3. The State mandates a background check called *LiveScan Criminal History Checks* (electronic fingerprinting) be done on all new school employees before starting employment. Cost is around \$70. *LiveScan* checks will then be maintained in a database that will regularly be updated with new information.

More information on each type of background check is provided below. If you have any further questions, please contact Mark Thompson-Kolar in the Education Department of the District Office at 888.225.2111 or [mark.thompson@michigandistrict.org](mailto:mark.thompson@michigandistrict.org).



## Protect My Ministry

<http://www.protectmyministry.com/lcms/>

*Protect My Ministry* is an LCMS National Contract Provider offering reduced pricing for employment and volunteer background screening services; with no annual fees, no minimums and no term obligations.

In order to implement proper risk management practices for protecting the church, children and youth, a pre-screening for every staff and volunteer person should include a criminal background check. Your insurance provider may require background checks for standard liability coverage. In order to help you determine the best background check for your state, *Protect My Ministry* has created a **web-based consultation system** that provides minimum recommendations for a criminal background checks. To speak with the representative call (800) 319-5581 or email [information@protectmyministry.com](mailto:information@protectmyministry.com).

SSN Verification & Address History Search	\$1.50
Statewide Criminal Search (plus fees)	\$4.50
National Criminal & Sex Offender Search	\$5.50
County Criminal Search (plus fees)	\$7.50
Employment Verification (per)	\$8.50
Education Verification (per)	\$7.50
Motor Vehicle Search (any state, plus fees)	\$4.50
Credit History (pre-employment)	\$7.50

## ICHAT

*ICHAT* is the only public resource for non-fingerprint-based Michigan criminal history background checks. Normally there is a \$10/check fee for this service. However, for nonprofits, the service is free with an agency code. View the PowerPoint slide show at the website below to gain a better understanding of this process. Please note, *ICHAT* is not an appropriate service to use for paid school staff, but would be appropriate for volunteers and preschool workers (excluding Directors).

### Michigan State Police Internet Criminal History Access Tool (*ICHAT*)

[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/msp/NewICHATGovtNonprofit\\_224415\\_7.pps](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/msp/NewICHATGovtNonprofit_224415_7.pps)

## LiveScan Criminal History Checks

All new staff members must have a *LiveScan* Criminal History Check (electronic fingerprinting) done as soon as possible. All veteran staff members must have electronic fingerprints on file no later than July 1, 2008.

Identix Identification Services (IIS) is no longer the only authorized vendor of *LiveScan* Criminal History Checks. Some ISDs have purchased the equipment, but the price is comparable to Identix.

Prior to setting up an appointment with Identix, or any State-approved *LiveScan* vendor, your school must request an identification number and the *LiveScan* Fingerprint Request Form. On your school's letterhead stationery, include the following information:

- The name of the principal or designated contact person
- E-mail address for the contact person
- School Telephone Number
- School Fax Number
- Address of where reports should be mailed
- Authorized Signature

This letter should be faxed to:

Ms. April McDaniel

Fax: 517.322.0635 or 517.322.6288

Upon receiving and processing the information, Ms. McDaniel will send:

- A confirmation and identification number for the school
- A copy of the *LiveScan* Fingerprint Request Form that each person requesting fingerprints must complete (make copies from the original)

Upon receiving the school ID number and the *LiveScan* Fingerprint Request Form, you may set up an appointment with a *LiveScan* vendor of your choosing (make sure the vendor is state-approved).

If Identix is your preferred vendor, contact them at 1.866.226.2952 or [www.identix.com/iis](http://www.identix.com/iis) to set up an appointment within a 50-mile radius. Appointments must be held within a 10-day period. Bring payment and *LiveScan* Fingerprint Request Form provided by the state.

## **PROTECTING VOLUNTEERS' CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

In order to help our church provide safe and quality services for those children and youth who participate in our programs and use our facilities, it is necessary to ask all applicants for positions involving supervision or custody of minors to complete an application form. Some of the questions on the application form may be of a personal/private nature. All personal information about an applicant will be kept confidential and such information will not be shared verbally or in written form with anyone who does not have specific involvement in the applicant screening process. Following the approval process, these documents will be maintained in a locked area.

## **VOLUNTEER SCREENING: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR CHILDREN'S & YOUTH MINISTRY**

1. Staff prepares a position description listing criteria and duties of particular position and our volunteer screening policies.
2. Staff consults with church office regarding spiritual gifts, abilities and interests that may match these criteria. A list may be provided with name, address, and phone. ("General appeals" for help with children are discouraged.)
3. The list of potential recruits is given to pastor(s) and other ministry staff members for an initial screening before contacts are made.
4. Contacts may now be made with potential volunteers explaining the position and need for volunteer screening form and procedures.
5. When interest is shown, potential recruits will complete the appropriate screening form in advance of starting work with children or youth.
6. The Volunteer Information Form is required of primary volunteers. Primary volunteers are those who serve on a regularly scheduled basis. The Secondary Volunteer Information Form is required of those secondary volunteers who serve on an occasional basis for a few hours a year.
7. After "formal application", these steps are recommended: a personal interview is held, reference checks are made, and a criminal records check is run.
8. Each step should be dated and documented in writing by the ministry staff person conducting this process. Forms and documents should be kept in a secured file.
9. Upon completion of these steps, the volunteer may begin supervised service with children or youth for a one-year renewable commitment upon a mutually agreed upon review and evaluation.

# VOLUNTEER INFORMATION FORM

Church/School: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Statement of Confidentiality

This application is to be completed by all applicants for any position involving the supervision or custody of minors. This is not an employment application form. This form is being used to help our church provide a safe and secure environment for those children and youth who participate in our programs and use our facilities. The completed application will be available only to designated staff members. Once the approval process has been completed, this document will be maintained in a secure file location.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle Maiden

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City Zip Code

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Marital Status: \_\_\_\_\_

Children's Names/Ages: \_\_\_\_\_

Hobbies/Interests: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of this congregation? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, how long? \_\_\_\_\_

If no, complete the following information on the church of which you have been a member in the past five years.

Church Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Is your spouse/family supportive of the commitment you want to make?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Uncertain \_\_\_\_\_

In what activities of the church/community/home are you presently involved? (i.e. school, scouts, sports, etc.)

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What gifts and talents has God given you to offer in your service here? (i.e. listening, caring, teaching, praying, etc.)

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**Personal References:** If you have worked with children previously, please list the names of two people other than relatives who have observed you working with children in the past three years.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**Character References:** Please list two character references (other than relatives).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any health conditions that might put a child at risk? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a crime? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you now, or have you ever, had a substance abuse problem? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you use illegal drugs? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been charged with physical or sexual abuse of a minor? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant's Statement:**

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references or churches listed in this application to give \_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church any information that they may have regarding my character and fitness for working with children or youth. I also authorize that a Criminal Records Check be conducted on me and that any information regarding conviction be related to \_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church. I agree to hold harmless from liability any person or organization that provides or receives information. I agree to abide by the guidelines and policies of \_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's License #: \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security #: \_\_\_\_\_

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**DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE:**

1. Personal References: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Character References: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Records Check: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Interview: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# SECONDARY VOLUNTEER INFORMATION FORM

(for those who serve on an occasional basis for a few hours per year)

Church/School: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Statement of Confidentiality

This application is to be completed by all applicants for any position involving the supervision or custody of minors. This is not an employment application form. This form is being used to help our church provide a safe and secure environment for those children and youth who participate in our programs and use our facilities. The completed application will be available only to designated staff members. Once the approval process has been completed, this document will be maintained in a secure file location.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Middle Maiden

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City Zip Code

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any health conditions that might put a child at risk? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a crime? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you now, or have you ever, had a substance abuse problem? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you use illegal drugs? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been charged with physical or sexual abuse of a minor? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# RECOGNIZING POTENTIAL ABUSE

According to the Centers for Disease Control (1997), child abuse is harm to, or neglect of, a child (individual under 18 years of age) by another person, whether adult or child. The American Academy of Pediatrics (2000) reports that more than 2.5 million cases of child abuse and neglect are reported each year. Of these, 35 percent involve physical neglect. Studies show that one in four girls and one in eight boys will be sexually abused before they are 18 years old. About one in 20 children are physically abused every year.

There are four types of abuse of a child:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

The best way to check for signs of potential abuse is to be alert to any unexplained changes in a child's body or behavior. The State of Michigan Child Protective Services offers these physical and behavioral indicators of maltreatment to children that could be potential tips to report. (2000)

## Physical Abuse-Physical Indicators

- Unexplained bruises (in various stages of healing), welts, loop marks
- Adult/human bite marks
- Bald spots or missing clumps of hair
- Unexplained burns/scalds
- Unexplained fractures, skin lacerations/punctures or abrasion

## Physical Abuse-Behavioral Indicators

- Self-destructive/self-mutilation
- Withdrawn and/or aggressive-behavior extremes
- Uncomfortable/skittish with physical contact
- Tries to stay at school late as if afraid to be at home
- Chronic runaway (adolescents)
- Complains of soreness or moves uncomfortably
- Wears clothing inappropriate to weather, to cover body
- Lack of impulse control (inappropriate outbursts)

## Sexual Abuse-Physical Indicators

- Pain or itching in genital area
- Bruises or bleeding in genital area
- Venereal disease
- Frequent urinary or yeast infections
- Massive weight change

## Sexual Abuse-Behavioral Indicators

- Withdrawal, chronic depression
- Sexual behaviors or references that are unusual for the child's age
- Seductive or promiscuous behavior
- Poor self-esteem, self devaluation, lack of confidence

- Suicide attempts (especially adolescents)
- Hysteria, lack of emotional control
- Habit disorders (sucking, rocking)

#### Emotional Abuse-Physical Indicators

- Mood swings or depression
- Self-destructive, self-injurious behaviors
- Hostile, aggressive behaviors
- Animal cruelty
- Headaches, stomach aches with no medical cause
- Unusual fears, increased nightmares

#### Emotional Abuse-Behavioral Indicators

- Difficulty making friends
- Difficulty learning
- Sudden change in self-confidence

#### Physical Neglect-Physical Indicators

- Unattended medical needs
- Consistent hunger, inappropriate dress, poor hygiene
- Consistent lack of supervision
- Failure to gain weight (especially in infants)

#### Physical Neglect-Behavioral Indicators

- Regularly displays fatigue or listlessness, falls asleep in class
- Steal/hoards food, begs from classmates
- Reports that no caretaker is at home
- Frequently absent or tardy
- Desperately seeks affectionate behavior

#### References

- "Issues in Child Care Settings," Centers for Disease Control, January 1997
- "Child Abuse and Neglect," American Academy of Pediatrics, 2000
- "Potential Indicator for CPS Referral," State of Michigan, Child Protective Services, March 21, 2002

## **REPORTING AND RESPONSE PROCEDURE**

1. All concerns, suspicions and allegations will be handled in a serious, timely and confidential manner.
2. The worker involved will report any allegations or suspicions to the supervisor of that ministry who will
  - a) report to the Senior Pastor who will
  - b) immediately call Protective Services and will
  - c) personally notify the child's parents or guardians.

### **What happens when I report a child abuse or neglect allegation to Child Protection Services?**

First, Protective Services will investigate the claim to determine if the situation falls within the guidelines of their definition of abuse or neglect.

The investigation would begin with the child in an environment away from the alleged perpetrator, and without prior coaching. The investigator would also make a face-to-face contact with the alleged perpetrator and talk with siblings, caretakers and witnesses.

If it is determined that the situation does fall within the guidelines, the next step is to determine the priority. Some situations call for an immediate response; others do not.

If it is determined by investigation that the situation does not fall within the guidelines of abuse or neglect, the Protective Services agency will send a letter to the reporting individual to notify him/her of this decision.

### **What information will Child Protective Services require from the reporting individual?**

The reporting individual should supply the agency with as much information as is possible. This includes the name of the child and a description of the alleged abuse or neglect. If possible, the reporting individual should also supply the names and addresses of the child's parents, the child's guardian, the persons with whom the child resides, and the child's age.

### **What about confidentiality and liability?**

The whole case file is confidential under the law.

The identity of the reporting person is confidential subject to disclosure only with the consent of that person or by judicial process.

With regards to liability, in accordance with Child Protection Law Act, No. 238, a person "acting in good faith who makes a report, cooperates in an investigation, or assists in any other requirement of this act is immune from civil or criminal liability."

# **BUILDING POLICIES**

## **Bathroom Policy Suggestions**

(Policies may be modified to meet the unique needs of your facilities.)

### **Bathroom Procedures for Preschool-Kindergarten**

- Designate specific restrooms to be used by preschoolers. To ensure safety, the main entrance doors to these bathrooms must remain propped open at all times.
- An adult female worker should accompany preschool-Kindergarten children to the bathroom.
- Adult workers should visually check the bathroom area before the child enters.
- Workers should not enter the bathroom alone with a child.
- Workers should wait by the bathroom entrance and allow the child to toilet him/herself.
- Help with outer clothing at the main entrance to the restroom may be permitted.

### **Bathroom Policies Grades 1-5/6**

- An adult worker will accompany child to the bathroom area.
- The worker should check the bathroom area before the child enters.
- Workers should not enter the bathroom alone with a child.
- The worker should wait in the hall and accompany the child back to the classroom.
- If a worker is not available, children in grades 1-5/6 may also use the buddy system to use the restroom.

### **Other Bathroom Policy Suggestions**

During programs where children will be moving to different classrooms and be in the care of different workers throughout the program time, you may desire to place a bathroom monitor outside each restroom or set of restrooms.

## **General Building Policy Suggestions**

- All classrooms used by children will have doors with windows, which will enable activities to be seen by supervisors of the program.
- Classrooms without adequate viewing windows must have doors open during program hours.
- All classrooms must have two workers present at all times.
- It is strongly recommended that all volunteers in one room shall not be from the same family. If such instance should occur, it will be only with the permission of the program director and must be held in a classroom with adequate visibility.
- Doors to unused rooms should remain open and have lights on during program hours.
- Physical contact with children should be minimal and only in the presence of other adults. Appropriate touching should be limited to handshakes, high fives, brief hugs or a brief touch on the shoulder.
- Children nursery through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade are to be released only to properly identified and pre-authorized individuals.
- Entrances and exits to the building should be monitored. Policies in this area will need to be specific to your facility and to the program being held.
- Emergency information and maps should be posted in each area used by children. Information could include: nearest phone, location of first aid kits, fire exits, fire extinguishers etc.

# **SPECIFIC MINISTRY POLICIES**

## **Nursery**

- All workers must complete the church application and approval process before working with children.
- Two workers, one of which must be an adult woman, must be present in the nursery at all times.
- It is strongly recommended that all volunteers in the nursery not be from the same family.
- Two workers must remain in the nursery until all children have been released to parent or guardian.
- Children must remain in the nursery at all times, until released to the designated caregiver.
- Only adult women may change diapers or take children to the bathroom. All diaper changes and children's use of the bathroom must be recorded.
- Because nursery workers will be working with children in the early stages of toilet training, specific policies will need to be developed to meet the needs of your facility and staff/volunteers.  
Ideas include:
  - Allowing only paid workers to care for toilet and diaper needs.
  - Asking parents to take care of toilet and diaper needs.
  - Helping with toilet needs or diapering only in the presence of another worker.
- At times, older children may be present in the nursery (1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> graders). The bathroom policies for their age group should be followed.

## **Sunday Morning/Weekday Evening Programs**

- All workers must complete the church application and approval process before working with children.
- Two workers must be present in any classroom at all times (except when one worker accompanies a child to the bathroom).
- It is strongly recommended that all volunteers in the classroom not be from the same family.
- Children nursery through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade are to be released only to properly identified and pre-authorized individuals.
- Two workers must remain at the activity until all children have been released to parent or guardian.
- There will be no teacher/student one-on-one outings or meetings.
- No group outings will take place during regular education program hours except those structured into the curriculum and pre-approved by the Program Director, Pastor, or Board of Education. For such trips, each student must have a signed permission and emergency form from the parent/guardian. The group leader must have all permission/emergency forms in their possession for the duration of the trip.
- Transportation done by program leaders and parents for outings must maintain a minimum of either two adults with one youth, or one adult with two or more youth transported to the same location.

## **VBS/Weekday Camps/Summer Programs**

- All workers must complete the church application and approval process before working with children.
- Two workers must be present in any classroom at all times (except when one worker accompanies a child to the bathroom).
- It is strongly recommended that all volunteers in the classroom not be from the same family.
- Children nursery through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade are to be released only to properly identified and pre-authorized individuals.
- Two workers must remain at the activity until all children have been released to parent or guardian.
- Parking Lot Monitors, Entrance and Exit Monitors, Bathroom Monitors and Hallway Monitors are strongly recommended for programs with a large number of visiting children and families. The use of two-way radios greatly improves the monitoring of large areas and is very helpful when a child is lost.

## **Misc. Children's Programming**

(Children's Choir, Liturgical Dance, Special Music Practices, etc.)

- All workers must complete the church application and approval process before working with children.
- Two workers must be present at any activity, practice, rehearsal, meeting, or performance (except when one worker accompanies a child to the bathroom).
- It is strongly recommended that all volunteers not be from the same family.
- Children nursery through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade are to be released only to properly identified and pre-authorized individuals.
- Two workers must remain at the activity until all children have been released to parent or guardian.
- No group outings will take place for performances except those pre-approved by the Program Director, Pastor, or Board of Education. For such trips, each student must have a signed permission and emergency form from the parent/guardian. The group leader must have all permission/emergency forms in his/her possession for the duration of the trip.
- Transportation done by program leaders and parents for outings must maintain a minimum of either two adults with one youth, or one adult with two or more youth transported to the same location.

## Volunteer Training Workshop Record

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Initial Date of Training: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Please Check Those That Are Applicable**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior and I will demonstrate my love for the Lord in the manner in which I respond to children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have attended the workshop on Volunteer Training.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have given permission for a background check with the MI State Police.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have viewed the video on reducing abuse and support the need for training.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I understand the requirement of the State and of this congregation in reporting abuse and agree to conform to the guideline.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will follow the direction of the staff as they assist me in my work for the Lord so that I might be productive for the Lord and help reduce the risk of misconduct.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



1<sup>st</sup> Year Renewal: \_\_\_\_\_ (initial) I have reviewed the guideline on Volunteers and agree with the above check list. \_\_\_\_\_ Leader Initial \_\_\_\_\_ Date

2<sup>nd</sup> Year Renewal: \_\_\_\_\_ (initial) I have reviewed the guideline on Volunteers and agree with the above check list. \_\_\_\_\_ Leader Initial \_\_\_\_\_ Date

3<sup>rd</sup> Year Renewal: \_\_\_\_\_ (initial) **I have gone through a refresher course on Misconduct.**

4<sup>th</sup> Year Renewal: \_\_\_\_\_ (initial) I have reviewed the guideline on Volunteers and agree with the above check list. \_\_\_\_\_ Leader Initial \_\_\_\_\_ Date

5<sup>th</sup> Year Renewal: \_\_\_\_\_ (initial) I have reviewed the guideline on Volunteers and agree with the above check list. \_\_\_\_\_ Leader Initial \_\_\_\_\_ Date

6<sup>th</sup> Year Renewal: \_\_\_\_\_ (initial) **I have gone through a refresher course on Misconduct.**

