

# St. Andrew United Church of Christ Policy for Preventing Child Abuse

## 1.00 Basic Policy

1.01 St. Andrew United Church of Christ, as a community of Christian faith, is committed to creating and maintaining programs, facilities and a community in which members, friends, staff and volunteers can worship, learn and work together in an atmosphere free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation or intimidation. It is the policy of St. Andrew to provide a safe environment for all our children from birth to age 18. Our policy regarding Child Abuse is one of zero tolerance. This policy will be in effect when and where ever our minor children are involved in a church sponsored activity, whether or not the activity is led by our members or is on our premises.

**Kentucky law requires that all cases of suspected child abuse be reported immediately. See paragraphs 9.01 through 9.04 for indications of child abuse. Paragraphs 8.02 through 8.03 outlines the process for reporting child abuse.**

## 2.00 Requirements for paid workers:

2.01 Before being hired, all ordained ministers recruited through a search committee will complete a disclosure form. This is an on-line operation and is part of submitting their profile. The disclosure information is forwarded to a Document Check firm the UCC has hired to process the criminal background check for all persons submitting a profile for a ministry related job. The firm initiates a check of their data base and several governmental data bases. All these checks are based on the social security number, as well as addresses, of the person being investigated.

2.02 All other paid workers will complete a written disclosure form (see formAA) and a criminal background check will be initiated by the staff relations committee.

Before being hired all paid workers will also be personally interviewed to assess the suitability of their character and qualifications for the position they seek.

2.03 Once hired, the background check for ordained ministers will be repeated as required by the Indiana-Kentucky Conference (IKC) of the United Church of Christ. Anniversary checks on other paid staff will be made by the Staff Relations team every two years on the anniversary of the prior check.

2.04 All paid workers will attend boundary workshops as required by the Kentuckiana Association..

### 3.00 Requirements for volunteers

3.01 All volunteers who work with children under the age of 18 shall have been either members or regular attendees at St. Andrew for at least six months.

3.02 All volunteers shall submit a disclosure form (**form BB**) prior to beginning their work as a volunteer. Volunteers will be divided into three groups: Volunteers in Training are volunteers ages 16 or 17. Certified Volunteers are volunteers and paid staff ages 18, 19, and 20. Certified Adult Volunteers are volunteers and paid staff ages 21 and over.

3.03 A request for a background check (**KY form AOC-PT-49**) on Certified and Certified Adult volunteers) will be forwarded to the Commonwealth of Kentucky's Pretrial Services Records Division who will search the court records of the entire commonwealth and return the information gleaned to us. Currently all court records on persons under the age of 18 are sealed in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, so no request for background check will be sent on any Volunteer in Training. At the time a Volunteer in Training reaches the age of 18, a background request will be initiated. The turn around time is estimated to be ten days or less and the cost (as of 04-09-07) is \$10.00 per search—paid for by the church. This check shall be repeated every two years on the anniversary of the prior check.

3.04 If the volunteer has moved here from another state within the past seven years, the church will submit a criminal check request to the other state also. Because not all states seal court records of persons under 18 years of age, the request to other states will include those for Volunteers in Training.

3.05 All forms will be maintained by the lay person who also maintains the list of volunteer workers for the Minister of Christian Education.

3.06 All volunteers will be interviewed by the Minister of Christian Education or designated lay person and will read the prepared training material (see exhibit A) and agree to abide by it prior to beginning their work as a volunteer.

#### 4.00 Policy for nursery/toddler/preschool (children from birth through the age four) workers

4.01 While the following paragraphs generally refer to Sunday activities, it should be noted that any activity involving nursery/toddler children will follow the same rules, ie, parents/guardians are expected to be on the premises at each time the child is.

4.02 All nursery/toddler/preschool children shall be registered when they first attend the session. The registration form (**12345A**) will include, (in addition to the particulars about the individual child) the parent/guardian's name, address and telephone number and where the parent/guardian will be located during the child's attendance in each session. If special requirements for any kind of medication are needed--specific instruction for this will be included on the registration form. All children shall be "signed in and out" by their parent/guardian for each session (see form 23456).

4.03 There will be at least two workers with nursery/toddler/preschool aged children at all times. The first will always be a Certified Adult Volunteer. The next may be either a Certified Adult or a Certified Volunteer. (It is not anticipated that Volunteers in Training will work during Church School, but may be the third worker in other activities.) When additional helpers are needed, the same scheme of workers will be followed as for the first two workers. Parents, who are not

certified, may not be counted in this number, but they may participate in the activity with their children. Parents are, also, encouraged to be certified even if they decline to volunteer. There will never be a time when there will be only one worker.

--Since the nursery/toddler/preschool area has a bathroom of its own, when an adult must assist the child in the bathroom, the door will be left open. If a child can do his/her bathroom duties on their own, the door may be closed to give privacy to the child.

--Diaper changing will be done on a changing table in full view of all other workers. See form **34567** for full directions on diaper changing.

4.04 Sometimes accidents happen during a session. For minor accidents comfort the child, provide Band-Aids or whatever is required and acceptable and continue on. Complete a parent notification form (**45678**) in duplicate. One copy goes to the parent and one is retained in a location determined by the Christian Education team.

4.05 If the accident seems more than minor, one worker should go immediately to the parent/guardian and follow their instructions thereafter. In most instances, a nurse will be available should the parent request assistance in that matter. A Bio-Hazard bag will be centrally located in the nurse's office for disposal of bloody items.

4.06 All nursery/toddler/preschool children shall be released **only** to the person or persons designated on the nursery/toddler/preschool registration form.

## 5.00 Policy for children ( grades kindergarten through grade five)

5.01 Except where specifically noted, the following paragraphs are generally assumed to apply to situations occurring during a regular Sunday session.

5.02 All children shall have a registration form, (**12345A or 12345B**), completed either when they promote to the class or when they first attend. The form will include the name, address,

telephone number of the parent/guardian and instructions for any special helps that may be required—including medication that may need to be administered.

5.03 There shall always be at least two certified volunteers. The first shall be a Certified Adult Volunteer, the second may be a Certified Volunteer. (It is not anticipated that Volunteers in Training will be utilized in Church school, but may be the third worker in other activities.) When additional workers are needed; the schedule for additional volunteers will be the same as followed for the first two (or three) as outlined above. There will never be only one worker with one or more children at any time. In the event that there is need for a “meeting” with one child and one adult, the meeting should be held in plain view of others, yet far enough away for privacy of conversation.

5.04 Time should be scheduled for a bathroom visit for all children in the group at the same time. Two volunteers will escort the children and will wait outside the bathroom for them. In the event that one child insists that he/she has to go at any other time, special arrangements may be made. If this request is prior to the scheduled trip, it may be practical to take all the children at this time. If the visit is following the scheduled trip, special arrangements agreed upon by the Christian Education Team will be determined and followed.

5.05 Sometimes accidents happen during a session. For minor accidents, comfort the child, provide Band-Aids or whatever is appropriate and continue on. Complete a parent notification form (45678) in duplicate. One copy goes to the parent and one copy is retained in a location designated by the Christian Education team.

5.06 If the accident seems more than minor, one worker shall go immediately for the parent/guardian and follow their directions thereafter. In most instances, a nurse will be available should the parent/guardian request assistance. A Bio-Hazard container will be centrally located in the nurse’s office for disposal of bloody items.

5.07 All kindergarten and grades one and two children shall be released to the person designated on their registration form unless otherwise specifically arranged by the parent/guardian. Such

arrangements shall be made at the time the child enters the activity. Children (grades three through five) may be allowed to leave on their own unless other arrangements are requested by the parent/guardian. A parent/guardian who wishes other arrangements may provide a written request and we will follow their wishes.

5.08 For activities outside of regular Sunday sessions and trips outside the campus—see “Policy for Youth”.

#### 6.00 Policy for Youth (Middle School and High School students)

6.01 All youth shall have a registration form (**12345B**) on file in the department. The form shall include the name and telephone number of the parents/guardian, information regarding emergency contacts (other than the parent/guardian), activity restrictions, special diet, allergies and instruction for any medications that might be needed by the youth.

6.02 Unless otherwise instructed, all youth may be released on their own following regular sessions in the church complex.

6.03 For purposes of the Safe Child Policy, there will always be at least two Certified Adult Volunteers with each youth group at all times. Additional workers as needed will also be Certified Adult Volunteers. Only Certified Adult Volunteers will serve in the middle school and high school groups. Parents who are not certified may not be included in these numbers, but may participate in the activities with their children. Parents are encouraged to be certified, even though they may not choose to volunteer.

6.04 It is assumed that youth will be mature enough to leave the room for whatever reason on their own and will not require removing one worker from the room to assist the youth. In addition, a youth may be requested to make out of class visits to the church office, etc., in lieu of the certified adult worker, once again avoiding the need for the worker to leave the room.

6.05 No one adult will be with any number of youth at any time. In the event that it is necessary to have a “meeting” with a youth and one adult, the meeting shall be held in plain view of others, while far enough away for privacy of the conversation.

6.04 When the activity is outside regular church sessions or hours, but is not an overnight trip, the parent/guardian shall sign a permission slip for the specific trip (**form 56789**) which will include instructions for the release of the child/youth when the group returns to the church. In the unlikely event that those instructions for the release of the child changes while the activity is in progress, every effort will be made to certify the change before the child/youth is released to the alternative person(s). If the youth leaves the church in church sponsored transportation and does not plan to return to the church with the group, the parent/guardian will be required to provide written instructions on the special release of the child.

6.05 All vehicles will include at least two Certified adult Volunteers, one of which will be the driver of the vehicle. Only Certified Adult Volunteers may be drivers of the vehicles. Parents who are not certified may not be counted in this number, but may participate in the activities with their youth. Clearly defined—this means that parents who are not certified may transport their children only, or they may travel in other vehicles counted as one of the youth. We encourage parents to be certified so that if needed, they may help in the transportation of children and youth even if they choose not to volunteer as helpers in any of the activities of the church involving children and youth.

6.05 On overnight, off the campus sessions, the form **78901** shall be completed for each youth going on the trip. This form will include a more extensive list of responsible persons, health care items and permission for a St. Andrew Certified Adult Volunteer to secure medical aid if required. In addition, there is available a “medication form” (form **89012**) for listing all medications the youth might need during any session. This form should be completed by a parent or guardian and included in a plastic zip lock bag which also includes the actual containers of the medication listed

on the form. All prescriptions should be in the original container (and should include the form on the container which shows the youth's name, the dosage required and the name of the doctor who prescribed it). Over the counter medicine should also have a paper attached onto the container listing the name of the youth and the dosage required.

6.06 The minimum requirements for sleeping quarters on overnight sessions is as follows: each sleeping room shall contain only persons of one sex and there will be at least two Certified Adult Volunteers in each room. Parents, who are not certified, may sleep in the same room as their children only. In addition, for larger groups in a hotel like setting, the youth may be placed in rooms without adults. The adults, while in a separate room, will retain the keys to the youth rooms and two Certified Adult Volunteers will make regular visits to each youth room-during the night-opening the door and determining that all is well in each room.

6.07 Adults will not accompany any youth to the shower or bathroom except when health/handicap or safety requires it. A special written request signed by the parent/guardian will be required in these instances and two Certified Adult Volunteers will be required for each instance.

#### 7.00 Administration of the safe child policy

7.01 The Staff Relations Team shall be responsible for the maintenance and administration of all forms relating to the paid staff, with the exception of the ordained ministers. This team shall request criminal background checks on all newly hired staff and shall request bi-annual checks thereafter. The Staff Relations Team shall set up a file for all the paper work related to the safe child policy, keep it in confidence in a secure location, and only the Team shall have access to it.

7.02 A lay-member of St. Andrew shall be appointed by the Christian Education Team to maintain and administer this policy as it relates to the volunteer workers. This person shall (1) keep a supply of all forms necessary in the certification process and make them available on request, (2) Make the request for a criminal background check on each new volunteer and when two years have passed,

initiate the anniversary check, (3) follow up to ensure that all completed paper work is received back in his/her hands and filed in the volunteer's file, (4) safeguard and protect in a confidential manner all the information learned, and (5) make available a list of all certified volunteers to church members who request it due to their need for certified help during activities relating to their area of responsibility. A copy of the registration forms for all children and youth will also be maintained in these confidential files.

## 8.00 Procedures for handling complaints of Sexual Exploitation or Harassment.

8.01 When a child comes with a claim of abuse, responding must be done carefully. The reason this child has come to you is that they trust and respect you. Remain calm; do not overreact or panic. Listen carefully and take notes. Respect the child's feelings. Do not conduct the interview in privacy—move aside where others cannot hear, but remain in view of another volunteer at all times. Ask the child to tell you what happened. Do not promise to keep the incident secret. Remember you are the trusted person and at the same time you are required to report the incident. Let the abused talk; do not ask questions except to clarify a statement. Remember this is an interview, not an investigation. Keep the story as confidential as possible. Do not share it with anyone else except as outlined below. When the interview is completed, report the abuse immediately as outlined below.

## 8.02 CHILD ABUSE CLAIMS INVOLVING OTHER THAN THE SENIOR PASTOR

8.02A. Any person who becomes aware of facts or circumstances that child abuse is occurring or has occurred is under legal obligation to report the matter immediately. For incidents happening in Jefferson County (Metro Louisville), that person shall make a report to appropriate authorities by calling Youth Protective Services at 594-4550 immediately upon learning or suspecting that a minor child (under age 18) has been abused. Child protective Services will handle the claim, except in the event that the abuse is happening right. In those instances Child Protective Services will refer the incident to the Police.

**While in any other location than Jefferson County, i.e., on an overnight trip, the following steps should be taken:**

If the abuse is suspected to have been occurring in Jefferson County, the reported will be delayed until the return to Jefferson County where the call shall be made to Youth Protective Services at 594-4550. If the abuse is seen and occurring right now, the call shall be made immediately to 911 and the local police (in the area where the group is presently located) will handle the call.

A written record of the claim shall be recorded on form **90123**.

8.02B. The Senior Pastor (or the Church Council President, in the absence of the pastor) should be informed as soon as practical following the report of the incident. This notification can take the form of the presentation of the form **90123**.

8.02C. The Senior Pastor (or Church Council President) will notify the Indiana-Kentucky Conference of the United Church of Christ. Any additional notification will be made as determined by the Church Council guided by the Indiana-Kentucky Conference.

### 8.03 CHILD ABUSE CLAIMS INVOLVING THE SENIOR PASTOR

8.03A The abuse claim shall be reported as outlined in paragraph 8.02A above.

8.03B The Church Council President shall be informed as soon as practical following the reporting of the incident. This notification can take the form of the presentation of the form 89102. No notification will be made to the senior pastor.

8.03C The Church Council president shall then notify the Indiana-Kentucky Conference of the United Church of Christ. Any additional notification will be made as determined by the Church Council with the guidance of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference.

### 9.00 How to recognize child abuse

9.01 There are basically five types of child abuse

--**Neglect** occurs when a caretaker fails to provide for a child's basic needs regarding, for instance—nutrition, nurturing, safety, education and medical care.

Indicators of neglect are a child who is hungry all the time, smaller than normal for his/her age, thinning hair, behind in grade level in school and constant health conditions such as cold, runny noses, nose bleeds, etc.

--**Emotional abuse** can include blaming, belittling, or rejecting a child; consistently treating siblings unequally; and a persistent lack of concern by a caretaker for the child's welfare.

Indicators of emotional abuse are a lack of self esteem, never speaking up or raising a hand in activities and indications that the child does not feel that he/she can succeed in any activity.

--**Physical abuse** is intentional injury cause by punching, beating, kicking, biting, burning or otherwise harming a child. Hazing and initiations are considered physical abuse and are prohibited and shall not be included as part of any activity.

Indications of physical abuse will be exemplified by a child who constantly has a sore body part, bruises or what looks like burn scars. A broken bone is not unusual.

--**Sexual abuse** occurs when the child is forced, manipulated, or tricked into sexual contact. Obscene telephone calls, fondling, intercourse, anal or oral sex, prostitution and pornography, as well as inappropriate computer contact, are included. Indicators of sexual abuse are such things as difficulty in walking or sitting; torn, stained or bloody underwear; pain or itching in the genital area; bruises or bleeding of the genitalia; and the presence of sexually transmitted diseases. More specifically these behaviors may be apparent:

- O age inappropriate understanding of sex
- O reluctance to be left alone with a particular person and a fear of touch
- O persistent and inappropriate sex play with peers or toys
- O Drawings of genitalia—masturbation in public
- O abuse of animals

**Sexual Harassment**, as opposed to sexual abuse is repeated or coercive sexual advances toward another person contrary to his or her wishes. It includes behavior directed at another person with the intent of intimidating, humiliating or embarrassing the other person, or subjecting the person to public discrimination.

9.01 Certified adults shall be vigilant to watch for all these forms of abuse and report them immediately.

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