

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA

CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY

Approved by the Session of First Presbyterian Church – revised October 2014

PURPOSE

The members of First Presbyterian Church of Stillwater, Oklahoma (FPC) believe that we are called by God to create a safe haven for all of God's people, particularly the children and youth in our care; protecting those who are powerless and empowering them through faith and trust in God's church and its members.

During each baptism of an infant, child, or adult into this covenant community of faith, the members of this church pledge to uphold the person in Jesus Christ and to teach, strengthen, and support the individual's relationship with the household of God.

This policy is intended:

- To be faithful to our baptismal vows as we seek to welcome children;
- To provide a safe and secure environment for children and youth at FPC;
- To protect children and youth from sexual, physical, verbal and emotional abuse while participating in FPC activities;
- To provide a mechanism to deal with reported concerns and subsequent actions;
- To guide FPC as an institution in the conduct of its employees and volunteers and to prevent incidents of child abuse; and
- To protect adult volunteers and employees from unwarranted allegations of child abuse.

This policy addresses eight components of child and youth protection:

1. Screening applicants for employment and volunteer service for a history of behavior detrimental to children and youth;
2. Training employees and volunteers in the FPC Child and Youth Protection Policy and in appropriate supervision and chaperoning;
3. Supervising children and youth;
4. Transporting children and youth;
5. Reporting allegations and/or concerns regarding child and youth protection issues;
6. Responding to allegations and/or concerns regarding child and youth protection issues;
7. Ensuring confidentiality to protect all people covered by this policy;
8. Addressing members of FPC who are known offenders;

First Presbyterian Church is committed to the safety, welfare, and the protection of all persons and particularly any child and youth participating in the activities and program of the church.

To this end, we institute the following policy.

I. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all FPC employees and all volunteers who participate in children and youth programs of FPC, including but not limited to:

- Sunday school classes
- Children's Church
- Children and youth fellowship programs
- Children's choir
- Church sponsored retreats, mission trips, etc.
- Vacation Bible School
- Church nursery and child care

Who is Covered by this Policy?

1. All employees of First Presbyterian Church are governed by this policy. With regard to any employee(s) of FPC, perceived conflicts or ambiguities in interpretation and application of this policy shall be resolved by the Personnel Committee with input from the Family Ministry Council.
2. All volunteers of First Presbyterian Church who work with children and youth are governed by this policy (with exceptions as noted).

What Does the Policy Require?

1. All employees and volunteers shall abide by the Code of Conduct (Appendix A).
2. Each person must assume responsibility for his/her own actions in working with children and youth and for attending training offered on child and youth protection.
3. An individual may be terminated from employment and/or volunteer service for failure to observe and abide by this policy. This action may be taken regardless of the outcome of any investigation if the Response Team, Personnel Committee, and/or the Family Ministry Council or appropriate committee, with supervisory responsibility for said individual, determine that the Child and Youth Protection Policy has not been followed.

Are outside groups using FPC facilities required to follow the FPC Child and Youth Protection Policy?

- All leaders of non-FPC sponsored groups and events using FPC facilities, which have direct supervision of children and youth, are expected to adhere to these policies.
- Upon receipt of the policy from FPC, the leaders must review the Child and Youth Protection Policy, sign the Outside Group Leaders Release Form (Appendix B) to acknowledge their review of it, and confirm their agreement to follow the policy.
- Although FPC will not perform background checks, seek personal and professional references, review employment records, or obtain civil and criminal records for such groups, leaders are expected to conduct their own due diligence in this regard. Outside groups assume the responsibility and risk for their groups.

POLICY TERMS (GLOSSARY)

Accused: the person against whom a claim of child abuse or other misconduct is made.

Accuser: the person claiming knowledge of child abuse by a person covered by the policy.

Adult: An individual 18 years of age or older. Recent high school graduates who serve as a volunteer with responsibility for a group or children are considered adult volunteers.

Child abuse: includes the following:

- **Physical abuse** - deliberately and intentionally causing bodily harm to a child under age 18.
- **Neglect** - failure or omission to provide food, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision or special care made necessary by the physical or mental condition of the child.
- **Emotional abuse** - mental injury from incessant rejecting, terrorizing, isolating, exploiting, corrupting, and denying emotional responsiveness.
- **Child sexual abuse or exploitation** – includes, but not limited to, rape, incest, lewd or indecent acts or proposals, and allowing, permitting, or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution or pornography.
- **Verbal abuse** – the use of words to cause harm to the person being spoken to. May consist of insulting, intimidating, threatening, shaming, demeaning, or derogatory language.

Children: individuals from birth through 5th grade.

Employee: any person who works for salary or wages at First Presbyterian Church (e.g. staff, custodians, child care and nursery workers).

Hiring Committee: the Session committee related to the employment position being filled.

Inappropriate behavior: includes failure to follow the prevention procedures outlined in this Child Protection Policy, physical/verbal interaction with a child that could be construed as sexual in nature, or any action that may put children or youth at risk of physical or mental harm. Such behavior, even if not considered abuse, is not in the best interest of our children and needs to be addressed and monitored in order to protect both the child and adult involved.

Professional staff: Full Time Program Staff, including pastors.

Reasonable suspicion or reasonable cause to suspect: a belief or opinion based on fact or circumstances that are sufficient for a prudent person to want to inquire further or to take protective action or to report a suspicion to authorities.

Response Team: a standing committee of at least 5 members elected by the Family Ministry Council and confirmed by the Session to facilitate the process of responding to allegations of violations of the policy. Members of the response team serve 3 years on a staggered basis.

Sex Offender: any person who has been convicted or received any probationary term for the commission or attempt to commit a sex crime (Sex Offenders Registration Act, 57 O.S. 581-590)

Volunteer, Level 1 – an individual who is invited to assist with a single or short-term activity and has limited responsibility for a group of children and youth.

Volunteer, Level 2 – an individual who is assigned to and/or given responsibility for a group or groups of children or youth on an on-going basis or who is responsible for a children or youth overnight.

Youth: Graduated 5th graders through 12th graders. Recent high school graduates who are participating in a program/event as a youth do not go through the background check process.

Youth Volunteers: youth under the age of 18 who assist an adult volunteer.

II. SCREENING

A neutral third party outside the church may be retained to conduct reference checks and/or criminal background checks, the results which will be made known to the professional staff. Whether disclosed voluntarily or as a result of a reference and criminal background check, the following could disqualify a person from being employed by the church and/or participating in the volunteer leadership of any activity involving children and youth as reviewed and determined by the professional staff:

The filing of charges alleging the offense of, any conviction for, or anyone who has pled guilty to murder; aggravated assault; sexual abuse; sexual assault (rape); aggravated sexual assault; injury to a child; crimes related to the possession, use, or sale of drugs, or controlled substances; incest; indecency with a child; inducing sexual conduct or sexual performance with a child; possession or promotion of child pornography; sale, distribution, or display of harmful material to a minor; employment harmful to children; abandonment or endangerment of a child; kidnapping or unlawful restraint; public lewdness or indecent exposure; enticing a child; or any other offense involving moral turpitude or the use of alcohol or illegal drugs.

SCREENING OF EMPLOYEES

Personal interviews, Employment Application Forms (Appendix C), personal and professional references, employment records, background checks (both criminal and civil) are required for all employees. The gathering of this information is to be done by the hiring committee (with background checks done by a member of the professional staff). Custodial staff and contract workers who routinely and consistently work near or interact with otherwise unsupervised children and youth must also complete these requirements. Information gained by these means will be used to determine eligibility to work with children and youth. Background checks will be updated every three years. These provisions will apply retroactively to all employees.

SCREENING AND SELECTION OF VOLUNTEERS

Six Months Policy

Any person in a volunteer position with children or youth, ordinarily, must have been a member of FPC for at least six [6] months. Any exceptions must be approved by the professional staff for each specific volunteer opportunity.

Volunteer Categories

Volunteer positions are graded into two levels to differentiate levels of responsibility and frequency of contact with children.

Volunteer, Level 1 (Volunteer 1) is defined as an individual who is invited to assist with a single or short-term activity and has limited responsibility for a group of children and youth. Youth Volunteers are considered to be Volunteer 1.

Volunteer, Level 2 (Volunteer 2) is defined as an individual who is assigned to and/or given responsibility for a group or groups of children or youth on an on-going basis or who is responsible for children or youth overnight. Adults who are participants on an overnight mission trip that includes child or youth participants will be required to go through the volunteer screening and selection process. Individuals wishing to be classified as Volunteer 2 will complete and sign the Background Investigation Consent Form (Appendix D) and attend a child protection policy training. Volunteer 2 individuals who have been a member at FPC for less than a year will be asked to submit three personal references to the professional staff. References must be received by the appropriate staff person before the volunteer begins service. Background checks, Volunteer Level 2 Information Forms, and the policy training will be updated every three years.

Recruiting Volunteers

In accordance with these polices, all committees/councils responsible for planning programs for children and youth will follow the plan for recruiting, screening, and orienting/training volunteers.

Committees will be responsible for ensuring potential volunteers receive volunteer packets and submit the following to the professional staff for processing:

- Volunteer Information Form (Appendix E or F)
- Signed Code of Conduct (Appendix A)
- Background Investigation Consent Form if Volunteer Level 2 (Appendix D)

Information from volunteer information forms, personal references, and background checks will be used by the professional staff to determine eligibility to work with children and youth. Only the professional staff may conduct the background checks on volunteers.

If the results of the background check disqualify an individual from participating in a volunteer position with children and youth, the professional staff will meet with the individual to discuss the findings. The individual will be given an opportunity to appeal the decision to the professional staff. In some circumstances, the findings may be reported to the Pastor to be addressed further (see Section IX). Pastoral care will be offered as appropriate.

III. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Training for Adults

All employees and level 2 volunteers, who work with children and youth, are required to attend a Child and Youth Protection training session and sign the relevant documents regarding child and youth protection. The Family Ministry Council will offer annual training opportunities. Volunteers and employees are expected to repeat the training every three years. The training will include the following:

- The need for the Child and Youth Protection Policy
- Definition of child abuse, signs of child abuse, and requirements for reporting
- Church policies governing working with children and youth, including the Code of Conduct
- Principles of supervision
- Procedures for reporting allegations and/or concerns regarding child and youth protection issues
- Procedures for responding to allegations and/or concerns regarding child and youth protection issues

IV. SUPERVISION

Required Forms

Staff and committees responsible for supervising children and youth activities are required to establish procedures for collecting the following forms to ensure the health and safety of participants: (these forms or copies of these forms should be kept on file in the church office)

- Youth Health Form (Appendix H) - required for all children and youth participating in an out-of-town church sponsored activity without parent or guardian supervision.
- Adult Health Form (Appendix I) - required for all adults who are sponsors for an out-of-town church sponsored activity

- Event Permission Forms (Appendix K) - these forms are specific to the event and provide for signed parental or guardian's permission to attend. They are required for all children and youth participating in church sponsored activities taking place outside of Stillwater.

Two-Adult Policy

Adults in leadership roles are expected to avoid situations where they are alone with children and youth by having leadership teams of at least two adults (or an adult with an approved youth volunteer) for all events. The presence of two or more adults prevents circumstances where child abuse could be potentially alleged or occur, allows shared leadership, allows for rapid response to emergencies, and facilitates appropriate discipline. At least two adults will actively supervise all church sponsored programs and activities involving children and youth whether on or off campus. When reasonable, adults will make an effort to remain in sight of one another at all times except in emergency situations. This two-adult policy extends to all overnight and off church property-related events.

For overnight activities, there must be a man assigned to provide leadership if boys are present and a woman if girls are present. Any exceptions to this procedure must go through the professional staff. The exception must be communicated to the parents or guardians of participants.

When one-on-one interactions between children and youth and employee/volunteers are unavoidable due to unforeseen circumstances, care must be taken to remain in an environment that provides visibility by others.

In situations of pastoral care, another staff member shall have prior knowledge of the employee's whereabouts and with whom they are meeting.

Open Door Policy

Employees and volunteers are expected to avoid any situation in which they could be alone with children and youth or out of sight of others except in emergency situations. Interaction between children and youth and volunteers and employees should be conducted in ways that promote visibility by others and remove the opportunity for secrecy and isolation. Where possible, windows should be in all rooms where these interactions occur, and blinds should remain open. Doors should remain open when this is not possible. This is to protect:

- a) children against situations in which abuse might occur, and
- b) adults against false accusations of child abuse.

Ratios

Day trips off church property:

- 1 adult to actively supervise 6 children grades preschool-5
- 1 adult to actively supervise 8 youth grades 6-12
- Minimum of 2 adults.

Overnight activities on or off church property:

- 1 adult to actively supervise no more than 8 youth of the same gender.
- Minimum of 2 adults

Termination

An individual may be terminated from employment and/or volunteer service for failure to observe and abide by this policy. This action may be taken if the Response Team, Personnel Committee, and/or the professional staff determine that the Child Protection Policy has not been followed.

V. TRANSPORTATION

Volunteers and employees who drive children and youth on the congregation's behalf must be at least twenty-one years old and have an Auto Safety Certification Form (Appendix L) on file in the church office including copies of a valid driver's license and proof of insurance. The form must be updated by the employee or volunteer every three years.

When possible, there will be at least three people present in any vehicle, either two adults and one child or youth or one adult and two children or youth. When this is not possible, parental or guardian consent must be obtained.

All occupants of a personal vehicle must use a seat belt and proper child safety restraints. Children shall not be transported in the bed of a pick-up truck, on a motorcycle, or an all-terrain vehicle. The use of cell phones for phone calls or texting while driving is prohibited while transporting children and/or youth during a church-sponsored event.

This policy shall not prohibit adult volunteers or employees from providing transportation in an emergency situation. The adult shall make a reasonable attempt to contact a parent or guardian prior to providing such transportation.

Transportation to and from meetings at the church is not part of children's or youth activities.

Reason for disqualification of driver

A DWI or DUI conviction or another conviction at the discretion of the professional staff during the past 10 years shall disqualify a person from transporting FPC children and youth by motorized vehicle, whether disclosed voluntarily or as a result of the criminal background check.

VI. REPORTING VIOLATIONS OF POLICY AND SUSPICIOUS, ABUSIVE, OR INAPPROPRIATE ACTIVITY

In order to maintain an environment free of destructive actions toward all children and youth, the First Presbyterian Church of Stillwater (FPC) employees, teachers, parents, and volunteers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation thought to be in violation of policy. Situations are seldom simple and straightforward. Religious leaders and congregational members should be guided by a commitment to the overriding priority of protecting the children. All reasonable effort will be made to keep the identity of the reporters in confidence; however, this might not always be possible.

Child Abuse Reporting Law

In Oklahoma, child abuse is defined by law as harm or threatened harm to a child's health and safety by a person responsible for the child's health and safety. **State law requires every health care professional, teacher and every OTHER person who has reason to believe that a child under 18 is being abused or neglected or is in danger of being abused or neglected, to report the suspicion of abuse promptly to the Department of Human Services (DHS) Oklahoma Statewide 24-Hour Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-522-3511 or to local law enforcement. A report may be made anonymously.**

Nothing in this policy precludes anyone from fulfilling these mandated responsibilities to report. Every employee and volunteer of FPC is required to report any situation which presents a suspicion that child abuse or neglect may have occurred.

Reporting Within the Church

In accordance with Oklahoma statute (Title 10A), it is desirable that any FPC employee or volunteer with first-hand knowledge or suspicion of abuse and/or neglect makes the initial report to the Department of Human Services to ensure accurate information-sharing. Notification to a member of the professional staff or the Response Team chair is encouraged, but will not interfere with the reporting process.

Those who wish to report an incident or inappropriate behavior to the professional staff should submit an Incident Report Form (Appendix M) to the Response Team chair or member of the professional staff.

VII. RESPONSE TO AN ALLEGATION

All allegations shall be regarded as serious, and due consideration shall be given to the rights and privacy of both the alleged victim and the person being accused. Any inappropriate conduct or relationships between an adult staff member or volunteer worker and a child/youth shall receive immediate attention and be investigated. Any such situations shall be reported to a member of the professional staff, or the Response Team chair.

RESPONSE TEAM

Response Team Composition

The Response Team is a standing committee of a minimum of five FPC members (at least one an ordained elder) elected by the Family Ministry Council and confirmed by the Session. The professional staff will serve as ex officio members without a vote. The Response Team may invite outside professional counsel as deemed appropriate (ex. mental health professional, legal counsel). Members are nominated on the basis of special knowledge and skills including, but not limited to, human resources, crisis intervention, liability exposure, children and youth safety, and/or mental health counseling. Members shall serve three-year terms with members rotating on a staggered basis. If an incident or allegations involve any of these individuals or their family members, that person will be removed from the Response Team. Attendance by people other than the Response Team at Response Team meetings is by invitation only. The accused will be informed of the Response Team membership and have the right to request that members be removed in cases of a conflict of interest.

Chairperson

Selection of the chairperson will be determined by the Response Team. The Response Team chair will be the initial contact when there is an allegation made, written or oral. Upon being notified of an allegation, the Chair will implement the Response Team's procedure.

Team Responsibilities

The Response Team is charged to:

- Coordinate implementation of the report and response process;
- Make provision for pastoral care to all parties throughout the process; and,
- Examine and recommend any changes to this policy and communicate those issues to the Family Ministry Council.

In addition, some incidents or allegations in the FPC children or youth programs may involve behaviors that are not clearly child abuse or violations of protection procedures, but may in other ways

be deemed inappropriate by a parent, the professional staff, or the Response Team. In such cases, the Response Team may be called together to review the situation and decide what action to take.

The Response Team does not have the legal authority, expertise or training to determine guilt or innocence. Its overall purpose is to protect members of the church community, and to ensure that the alleged victim and the accused are treated with dignity and respect. Persons of this team must understand and respect the issue of confidentiality.

Restrictions of Contacts with Children/Youth

In order to protect the children and youth in our programs from potential risk and to protect the accused from further suspicion, decisions about removing the alleged violator/accused from interacting with children or youth in the FPC programs, or other church events and activities will be made by the Response Team. A decision should be made and action taken in a timely manner based on the possible threat to the children, the credibility and seriousness of the allegation, and other related factors. Steps to be taken may include any or all of the following:

1. If a report is made to DHS or law enforcement, a leave of absence will be mandatory for the alleged violator/accused. The person who is being accused will be required to refrain from participating in all child and youth activities until a disposition of the alleged violation has been made and/or it is determined if further action shall be taken. Care shall be taken to handle this in a discreet manner.
2. The Response Team may determine, even if the allegation is not sustained or even without an accusation of abuse being made, that they have reason(s) for concern that an individual's contact with children or youth in our congregation potentially places both the adult and the children at risk of incident or accusation. For this reason, the Response Team is authorized to restrict an individual from participation in all children and youth activities and programs of FPC, either permanently or for a length of time. They also have the option to recommend another appropriate action which may include a review of the process in that program, and /or further education.
3. If the person is an employee, such conduct also may result in termination of employment.
4. In the event of an unsubstantiated allegation, the individual's likely effectiveness in working with children/youth will be considered. The Response Team will make a determination as to whether the individual will be allowed to return to their previous position and will make a recommendation to the individual and the church. Pastoral counseling will be made available.
5. The professional staff and the Response Team retain the right and responsibility to screen and authorize volunteers for teaching or working in the FPC children/youth programs, and the Response Team will make final decisions about removing a teacher or otherwise restricting an individual's contact with children and youth on church property or at church-sponsored events.
6. Prompt warnings shall be issued when appropriate, and the situation monitored closely. The adult worker's services shall be terminated immediately for continued violation of such warnings, or for a single violation of sufficient gravity. Warnings will be put in writing and filed in the staff or volunteer's file.

Disposition of an Alleged Violation

Final determination shall be based upon such evidence as the Response Team deems appropriate, and the evidence may include the results of any investigation by the church or law enforcement or child protection agencies, or the filing, prosecution or outcome of any criminal charges or other legal proceedings. The Response Team may, at its discretion, delay disposition pending the final outcome of any investigation involving the alleged violation.

Appeals

Actions taken by the Response Team may be appealed in writing to the Session through the moderator and the Clerk of Session. An employee has the right to appeal the decision to the Personnel Committee. In the case of an appeal, the Personnel Committee shall have access to the appropriate Response Team documentation.

VIII. CONFIDENTIALITY

Adults who work with children and youth under the auspices of the church are responsible not only to the children and youth, but also to the church as well. *It is important for every member to act both ethically and legally as an agent of First Presbyterian Church.* In order to ensure that the safety of our children and youth is our highest priority, we must encourage the responsible reporting of all concerns or suspicions that may put children and youth at risk for abuse or other harm.

Sometimes a person will learn that a child or youth is the victim of abuse, is suicidal, has a drug problem, or similar concern for which immediate attention is necessary. Therefore, such information should not be kept to oneself. For this reason, it is important to never give children or youth the impression that secrets such as these will be kept for them. Confidentiality is not secret keeping. For the most part, a covenant of confidentiality will mean that information told to someone in confidence will not be repeated. However, when the information indicates a potentially serious crisis or harm, it is critical to encourage the child or youth to seek help from a parent or other authority figure. In addition, the person in whom the child or youth is confiding should consult with a member of the professional staff or the Response Team chair, about an appropriate course of action.

All reports to the Response Team will be considered confidential. In this context, “confidential” means that the identity of the alleged victims, accused, and/or reporting persons, the details of the allegation or concern, and any other identifying information, will be kept private among the members of the Response Team and the accused. This information will not be disseminated to the congregation. This does not preclude reports being made to comply with applicable laws.

The person reporting the allegation is informed that a limited release or waiver of confidentiality may be necessary if the case is taken to the Personnel Committee or to the Session. When the accuser shares allegations in a “privileged communication” setting such as counseling, permission must be granted by the accuser in order for the information to be shared with the accused.

Adequate care, respect, and confidentiality shall be offered to alleged victims, those accused or reported, and those making reports until the allegation is substantiated or cleared.

Staff Care of Documents

All information will be treated in a confidential manner.

Interviews, reference checks, employment records, auto safety certification information, criminal background checks, and Response Team documentation are to be documented in writing and become confidential church property. These documents will be kept in secure storage (i.e. locked cabinet) in an office monitored by the FPC security system. These records will not be released to any person except with the written approval of the professional staff. Records may be made available to the employee or volunteer, but not a candidate for employment, if a written request is made to the professional staff.

Only the professional staff will review forms and have access to the information filled out by volunteers or documentation submitted by the Response Team.

In the case of a report of suspicious activity, the Response Team and the appropriate legal authorities shall have access to the information.

IX. ADDRESSING KNOWN SEXUAL OFFENDERS

At First Presbyterian Church of Stillwater, we seek to live in covenant with God and with one another and to be a redemptive community. We also acknowledge that redemptive action and responsible action can, at times, be in tension or even in seeming opposition. We embrace this fact as a natural part of seeking to be the church in the world. We adopt these procedures for ministering to those among us who are known sexual offenders of children and youth while maintaining our focus on protecting the children and youth of our church.

When FPC staff or members become aware of a known sex offender involved in the life of the church, the Pastor must be notified. The Pastor will appoint a consultation group of 3-5 members to meet with the Pastor in order to establish appropriate boundaries for the known sex offender, in writing using the Limited Access Agreement (Appendix N). This document will govern the life of the known sex offender within the church, including areas on church grounds and facilities where he/she may go unaccompanied. Group members will receive training in protection of children and youth and in dealing with known sex offenders. It is preferred that members of the consultation group have a knowledge base in working with sexual offenders. No decisions made by this group will conflict with any provisions of the FPC Child and Youth Protection Policy. The Pastor will then meet with the known sex offender to discuss the boundaries. The known sex offender will give written acknowledgement and acceptance of FPC's Child and Youth Protection Policy.

At no time is a known sexual offender to be:

- assigned to ministries with children and youth;
- allowed to congregate with children and youth; or
- allowed in areas of the church or grounds dedicated to, or in use primarily by, children and youth without being accompanied by other adult supervision if children or youth are present.

As circumstances warrant, the Pastor may identify a known sex offender to church employees and volunteers whose ministries should be informed of this fact (with notice to the known sex offender). Known sex offenders will receive the normal pastoral care afforded any member.

Should a known sex offender disregard the terms established in this policy, or disregard any boundaries or conditions set by the consultation group, the violation will be handled through the Rules of Discipline in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

X. REVIEW, REVISION, and TRAINING OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Review and Revision

The Family Ministry Council (FMC) will be responsible for an annual review of the Child and Youth Protection Policy document, including the implementation of the policies and procedures in the life of the church. This includes reviewing the process of selection, training, and supervision of volunteers and employees by committees and staff. The Council will consider changes to the policy and submit those they make to the Session for approval. The Council will be responsible for disseminating changes to affected individuals and groups.

Training

The FMC is responsible for creating a Child and Youth Protection training program for employees, volunteers, and other interested members of the church. Evaluation of the training program will be conducted regularly.