

Child Protection Policy Training - First Presbyterian Church, Stillwater, OK

All volunteers/employees working with or around children/youth: please read this document to orient yourself to the policy and to issues of child safety.

Copies of the Child and Youth Protection Policy, the Code of Conduct, and the Incident Report Form are located in the Information Center in the narthex.

Who to Contact:

- Questions regarding implementation of the policy
 - Professional staff
 - Leah Hrachovec, Jenny Hardin, Jenna Campbell
- Questions regarding the reporting of/responding to an incident
 - Response Team
 - Brenda Nipp, Thad Leffingwell, Kay Stewart, Brandi White

CHILD PROTECTION AS A FOUNDATION OF MINISTRY

Why We Have a Policy

Policy, p. 1

The Eight Components of Our Policy

Policy, p. 1

Key Definitions

Policy, p. 3

- Note forms of Child Abuse

Screening

Policy, p. 4

SYMPTOMS OF MOLESTATION

Physical Signs:

- Lacerations and bruises
- Nightmares
- Irritation, pain, or injury in the genital area
- Difficulty with urination
- Discomfort when sitting
- Torn or bloody underclothing
- Venereal disease

Behavioral Signs:

- Anxiety when approaching the ministry
- Nervous or hostile towards adults

- Sexual self-confidence
- “Acting out” of sexual behavior
- Withdrawal from ministry activities and friends

Verbal Signs may include the following statements:

- “I don’t like [a particular ministry worker].”
- “[A ministry worker] does things to me when we’re alone.”
- “I don’t like to be alone with [a ministry worker].”
- “[A ministry worker] fooled around with me.”

PRINCIPLES OF SUPERVISION

As risk increases, supervision should also increase.

- Isolation Principle – Risk increases as isolation increases
 - Influences – number of people participating, location including physical arrangement, time of day
- Accountability Principle – As accountability decreases, risk increases
 - Consider the personal character and integrity of the worker, screening, personal reference checks
 - Degree of openness and transparency – notification of any activity, whether at church or outside
- Power and Control Principle – Risk increases when there is an imbalance of power and control
 - Factors to consider – age, size, strength, control and authority

Two Adult Policy/Open Door Policy

Policy, p. 6

Avoid being alone with a child or youth by having leadership teams of two adults. Remain in an environment that provides visibility by others.

In general, follow the Rule of 3 – either one adult in an area with at least two youth. Or two adults in an area with one youth. Maintain three people always.

Code of Conduct

All volunteers must read, sign, and agree to follow the Employee and Volunteer Code of Conduct.

REPORTING

Child Abuse Reporting Law

Policy, p. 7

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.

IF THE CHILD IS IN IMMINENT DANGER, CALL THE POLICE (911).

When making a report, be prepared to give:

- The child/minor's name and present location
- Family name and address
- Names and ages of siblings, if any
- Language and ethnicity of the family
- The suspected perpetrator's name, if known
- A description of what you have seen or heard
- The names of any other people having knowledge of the abuse
- Your name and phone number (report can be made anonymously)
- School, church or work address

If You Suspect a Child Has Been Abused:

- Keep calm
- Show interest and concern
- Reassure and support the child
- Take action. It could save a child's life
- DO NOT:
 - Panic or overreact
 - Pressure the child
 - Wait to prove the allegation (not your job!)
 - Confront the offender
 - Blame the child or minimize the child's feelings
 - Overwhelm the child with questions

RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION

Policy, p. 8

Response team: Brenda Nipp, Thad Leffingwell, Kay Stewart, and Brandi White

Incident report forms found in the Information Center in the narthex