

First Presbyterian Church Child Protection Policy 2017-2018

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. First Presbyterian Church seeks to provide a safe, secure, and loving environment for children to participate in and where parents feel comfortable leaving their child. Therefore we have a policy that reflects our desire to prevent child abuse and to stop child abuse when we become aware of it.
- B. Our first line of defense in preventing child abuse is the application, screening, and interview process that all volunteers and employees (collectively referred to as “Workers”) of First Presbyterian Church must complete prior to being placed permanently in a classroom.
- C. All people who work with children on a regular basis regardless of their area of expertise are expected to adhere to the Child Protection Policy. Failure to do so may result in dismissal from their position.

II. SCOPE

- A. This Policy shall apply to all current and future Workers, compensated and/or volunteer, who have the responsibility of supervising the activities of minors, children, or youth as defined herein.
- B. Volunteers assisting on an occasional basis with group activities of the minors, children, or youth will not be required to complete the screening requirements outlined herein.

III. GENERAL DEFINITIONS

- A. “Child,” “children,” “youth,” and “minor” shall be defined as any individual under the age of eighteen (18) years, who is still in elementary, middle or high school or whose mental capacity is that of a minor.
- B. “Adult” shall be defined as any individual who is at least eighteen (18) years of age.
- C. “Worker” shall be defined as any adult who serves as a volunteer and/or paid employee who is given the responsibility of working with or caring for minors, children or youth on a regular basis. “Worker” does not include volunteers assisting on an occasional basis with group activities of minors, children or youth. “Worker” includes such individuals as Sunday school teachers, Confirmation mentors, Youth Group Mentors, Nursery staff, music and pastoral staff.

- D. CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT DEFINITIONS - As defined by "The National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse"

1. Physical Abuse: Non-accidental injury, which may include beatings, violent shaking, human bites, strangulation, suffocation, poisoning, or burns. The results may be bruises and welts, broken bones, scars, permanent disfigurement, long lasting psychological damage, serious internal injuries, brain damage or death.
2. Neglect: The failure to provide a minor, child, or youth with basic needs including food, clothing, education, shelter and medical care; also abandonment and inadequate supervision.
3. Sexual Abuse: The sexual exploitation of a minor, child, or youth by an older person as in rape, incest, fondling of the genitals, exhibitionism, or pornography. It may be done for the sexual gratification of the older person, out of need for power or for economic reasons.
4. Emotional Maltreatment: A pattern of behavior that attacks a minor's, child's, or youth's emotional development and sense of self worth, such as constant criticizing, belittling, insulting, manipulation, also providing no love, support, or guidance.

IV. GUIDELINES

A. Worker approval and identification:

1. All Workers of First Presbyterian Church will be required to complete an "Application to Work with Minors" form. Information obtained on the "Application to Work with Minors" form will be kept confidential.
2. All Workers of First Presbyterian Church must also complete a "Consent to Background Check" form. Information obtained on the "Consent to Background Check" form and resulting from any background check will be kept confidential.
3. Criminal background checks will be performed on each Worker once the "Application to Work with Minors" and the "Consent to Background Check" forms are completed. The Business Manager will be responsible for submitting the request for a criminal background check. However, only authorized staff of First Presbyterian Church shall have access to the results of the criminal background checks.
4. Review of the Application and Criminal background check results shall be conducted by the Pastor and Director of Christian Education.
5. Should the Pastor or Director of Christian Education believe that further review is necessary before a decision is reached, they may solicit input from a session member or members who are directly involved in the activity, program, or ministry in which the applicant is applying to work.
6. No Worker will be permitted to work unsupervised with children until active in the life of the church for a minimum of six (6) months, unless

parental consent is given.

7. Any prospective or current Worker that has been convicted of the following will not be permitted to participate in the leadership, sponsorship or supervision of any activities in which they would have contact with minors, children or youth:
 - i. Criminal homicide;
 - ii. Aggravated assault
 - iii. Crimes related to the possession, use or sale of drugs or controlled substances;
 - iv. Crimes in which alcohol was provided to minors;
 - v. Sexual Abuse or Misconduct, in any form;
 - vi. Sexual Assault;
 - vii. Injury to a child, including but not limited to abandonment, neglect, endangerment, or abuse of a child;
 - viii. Indecency with a child;
 - ix. Kidnapping or unlawful restraint;
 - x. Public lewdness or indecent exposure;
 - xi. Enticing a child

B. Reporting

1. All Workers and members of the congregation are encouraged to report suspicious activity or suspicious individuals to a church staff person.
2. The following shall be reported by all Workers to the Pastor or Director of Christian Education of First Presbyterian Church and law enforcement:
 - i. Any direct observations or evidence of sexual activity in the presence of or in association with a minor, child or youth.
 - ii. Any display or demonstration of sexual activity, abuse, insinuation of abuse, or evidence of abusive conduct towards a minor, child or youth.
 - iii. Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between any person and a minor, child or youth.
 - iv. Infliction or physically abusive behavior or bodily injury to a minor, child or youth.
 - v. Physical neglect of a minor, child or youth.
 - vi. Mental or emotional injury to a minor, child or youth.
 - vii. The presence or possession of obscene or pornographic materials at any function of First Presbyterian Church.
 - viii. The presence, possession, or being under the influence of any illegal or illicit drugs.

- ix. The consumption of or being under the influence of illegal or illicit drugs or alcohol while leading or participating in a function for any minor, child or youth at First Presbyterian Church.
 3. The Pastor or Director of Christian Education receiving the report shall complete a written incident report and ensure that the reporting party has contacted law enforcement or health and human services. However, investigation of the incident shall be left to the proper law enforcement or health and human services authorities.
 4. All reports shall remain confidential.
 5. If the accused is a paid staff person, the Personnel Policy of First Presbyterian Church shall apply.
- C. All Workers shall be given a copy of this Policy and shall sign a verification that he or she has reviewed and understands the Policy and agrees to be bound by its terms. The original signed verification shall be maintained by First Presbyterian Church.
- D. Restroom procedures:
1. Never take a child alone to the restroom. You must be accompanied by another adult or other children.
 2. It is recommended when taking children to the restroom, that a Worker only take children of the same gender as the Worker whenever circumstances permit.
 3. Children in Kindergarten or younger must be escorted to the restroom by an adult. Children in grades above kindergarten may be sent in pairs to the restroom, without adult supervision. Workers should monitor this situation closely.
 4. Children should have as much privacy as possible. Enter a bathroom stall only when absolutely necessary to assist the child, keeping the door open.
 5. Diapers are only to be changed in designated, highly visible areas and in the presence of other Workers.
- E. Classroom and Youth Group Activities Procedures
1. Parental permission shall be obtained in advance for involvement in church sponsored programs, activities or whenever an adult might be spending time alone with a child. Written permission shall not be required for participation in regularly scheduled youth activities such as Sunday school and weekly youth group meetings. Parents transporting their children to these regularly scheduled youth activities are assumed to have given permission.
 2. Workers are NEVER to take a child to the child's home or their home without

another adult accompanying them unless prior parental consent is given. Permission need not be written.

3. A door without windows shall remain open at all times.

F. Nursery Guidelines

1. The Nursery is available for children ages infant to five (5) years old. Older children may be permitted to stay at the discretion of the Worker supervising the Nursery.
2. At least one adult must be present in the Nursery for every four children attending the Nursery if any of the children are eighteen (18) months old or younger. If all children attending the nursery are more than eighteen (18) months old, at least one adult must be present in the Nursery for every 6 children. However, a minimum of two adults shall be present at all times, regardless of the number of children.
3. One of the adults must be a "Worker" as defined by this Policy having completed all requirements contained herein. For purposes of the nursery only, the second adult may be a person sixteen (16) years or older.
4. All children attending the Nursery shall be signed in and out by their parent or guardian.

G. Overnight Youth Group Activities

1. A minimum of 1 Adult for every 6 minors shall be present at all overnight youth group activities. For purposes of the ratios of Adults to minors during overnight activities, an Adult shall be defined as a person over the age of twenty-one (21) years old. An Adult of each gender must be present at all times if there are minors, children, or youth of both genders participating or attending the activity.
2. Parents shall receive a written list of activities scheduled and shall give written permission for their child to participate in any overnight youth group activities and sign a medical release form. These forms must be completed before any child shall be permitted to participate.
3. All children and adults shall sleep separately based upon gender and an adult supervisor of the same gender shall be present during the sleeping time. If all children and adults are sleeping in one room, it shall be sufficient for the genders to be separated within the room.
4. It is never appropriate for an adult who is not a family member to share a bed with a child.
5. Males and females should have separate access to bathroom facilities.

H. Touching

1. We live in an age where child abuse is a reality in our society. The church

should deal with this issue as a "good shepherd" by taking steps to protect the children in our care. First Presbyterian Church has implemented a touching policy that will safeguard our children while promoting a positive, nurturing environment for ministry to them. The guidelines below are to be carefully followed by anyone working with children.

2. Hugging and other forms of appropriate physical affection between workers and children are important for a child's development and are generally suitable in our church setting.
3. Physical affection should be appropriate to the age of the child. (For example, it is generally appropriate for a four-year-old to sit on a Worker's lap and give hug.)
4. Touching should be initiated by the child. It should be a response to the child's need for comforting, encouragement, or affection. It should not be based upon the adult's emotional need.
5. Touching and affection should only be given when in the presence of other Workers. It is much less likely that touches will be inappropriate or misconstrued as such when two Workers are present and the touching is open to observation.
6. These rules are especially important when diapering a baby or helping a young child change clothes or use the restroom.
7. Touching behavior should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. As Workers our behavior must foster trust at all times; it should be above reproach.
8. A child's preference not to be touched should be respected. Do not force affection upon a reluctant child.
9. Workers are responsible to protect children under their supervision from inappropriate touching by others.
10. Workers must promptly discuss inappropriate touching or other questionable behavior by other Workers or any other individual with the appropriate First Presbyterian Church staff or body.
11. Corporal Punishment (hitting or spanking) and other forms of punishment involving physical pain are never appropriate in First Presbyterian Church activities. This rule holds true even if parents have suggested or given permission for corporal punishment.

I. Suspected Child Abuse

1. Reporting Suspected Child Abuse:
 - a. All Workers shall be familiar with the definitions and descriptions of

child abuse listed above.

- b. If you suspect that a child at First Presbyterian Church has been abused the following steps are to be followed.
 - i. IMMEDIATELY report the suspected abuse to the appropriate member of First Presbyterian Church staff or the head of staff.
 - ii. DO NOT interview the child regarding the suspected abuse. This will be conducted by a trained professional. It is your responsibility to report SUSPECTED abuse, not to verify the abuse has occurred.
 - iii. DO NOT discuss the suspected abuse with other workers, parents, etc. All information regarding the child should be kept confidential with the First Presbyterian Church staff and the proper authorities.
- c. First Presbyterian Staff will provide a written report regarding the suspected child abuse which shall include the name of the child, the individual suspected of committing the abuse, if known, any other children or adults present at the time of the abuse or who may have knowledge of the suspected abuse, and a detailed description of the suspicions and how the allegation originated. This report is to be completed within 24 hours of when the suspicion arose and given to the Head of Staff.
- d. After the suspected child abuse case has been reported, proper steps will be taken by First Presbyterian Staff to report the suspected abuse to the appropriate authorities.

J. Failure to Follow Policy

1. Violations of these guidelines or suspect behavior by other Workers must be reported to appropriate First Presbyterian Staff.
2. Workers who disobey these guidelines may be reassigned or relieved from duty at the sole discretion of First Presbyterian Staff.

**First Presbyterian Church
Child Protection Policy
Worker Verification**

I have read and fully understand the First Presbyterian Church Child Protection Policy (“Policy”) dated **October 5, 2016**. I agree to abide by the terms of the Policy faithfully. I understand that should I fail to act in accordance with the Policy, I may be reassigned, relieved from duty, my employment may be terminated, or I may be barred from participating or assisting in future First Presbyterian Church activities in minors, children or youth.

Signature Date

Print Name

**First Presbyterian Church
840 South 17th Street, Lincoln, NE 68508
Phone: (402) 477-6037 Fax: (402) 477-6048**

First Presbyterian Church

Application to Work with Minors

This application is to be completed by all applicants for any position (volunteer or compensated) involving the supervision or custody of minors. It is being used to help the church provide a safe and secure environment for those children and youth who participate in our programs and use our facilities.

Date

Name

Address

City State Zip

Home Phone

Cell Phone

Present employer

Can we call you at work? _____ Work phone number

Are you involved in Youth Activities? How long have you been at First Presbyterian Church?

List (name and address) of other churches you have attended regularly during the past five years:

Have you ever been arrested or convicted of a crime involving children? Yes No

If Yes, please explain:

I attest that the information provided is complete and accurate.

Signature

Date

First Presbyterian Church Consent to Background Check

Full Name _____

Last

First

Middle

Maiden

Sex: (please indicate)

Male _____

Female _____

Race: (please indicate)

W

B

I

A

H

O

White

Black

American Indian

Asian/Pacific Islander

Hispanic

Other

Date of Birth: ____ / ____ / ____

Year

Month

Day

Social Security # _____ - _____ - _____

Driver's License #: _____ State: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Have you ever been convicted of a crime? ____yes ____no

Are there any legal charges pending against you? ____yes ____no

If yes, please explain: _____

Additional names: _____

I, _____ (applicant name), hereby authorize First Presbyterian Church and/or its agents to make an independent investigation of my background, references, character, past employment, education, criminal, or police records, including those maintained by both public and private organizations and all public records for the purpose of confirming the information contained on my Application and/or obtaining other information, which may be material to my qualifications for volunteer or paid employment now, and if applicable, during the tenure of my volunteer or paid employment with First Presbyterian Church.

I release First Presbyterian Church and/or its agents and any person or entity, which provides information pursuant to this authorization, from any and all liabilities, claims, or lawsuits in regards to the information obtained from any and all of the above referenced sources used.

Signature of Applicant

Date

MEDICAL RELEASE FORM

First Presbyterian Church

840 South 17th Street

Lincoln, NE 68508

(402) 477-6037

Name of Minor _____ Age _____ Birthdate _____
Address _____ City/State/Zip _____
Home Phone _____ Parent/Guardian Business Phone _____
Social Security Number of Youth _____

THE UNDERSIGNED DOES HEREBY GIVE PERMISSION FOR MY/OUR CHILD _____ TO ATTEND AND PARTICIPATE IN ACTIVITIES SPONSORED BY FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FROM _____(DATE) TO _____(DATE).

I (WE) AUTHORIZE DESIGNATED YOUTH SPONSORS, IN WHOSE CARE THE MINOR HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED, TO CONSENT TO ANY X-RAY, EXAMINATION, ANESTHETIC, MEDICAL, SURGICAL, OR DENTAL DIAGNOSIS OR TREATMENT AND HOSPITAL CARE, TO BE RENDERED TO THE MINOR UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE MEDICAL PRACTICE ACT BY THE MEDICAL STAFF OF A LICENSED HOSPITAL, WHETHER SUCH DIAGNOSIS OR TREATMENT IS RENDERED AT THE OFFICE OF SAID PHYSICIAN OR AT SAID HOSPITAL.

THE UNDERSIGNED ALSO AUTHORIZES DESIGNATED YOUTH SPONSORS TO ADMINISTER FIRST AID TREATMENT DEEMED NECESSARY IN THE ABSENCE OF A PHYSICIAN. THE UNDERSIGNED ALSO AUTHORIZES DESIGNATED YOUTH SPONSORS TO ADMINISTER TYLENOL AND/OR OTHER OVER-THE-COUNTER DRUGS TO THE ABOVE MINOR AS APPROPRIATE EXCEPT _____ (LIST OR INDICATE NONE).

THE UNDERSIGNED SHALL BE LIABLE AND AGREE(S) TO PAY ALL COSTS AND EXPENSES INCURRED IN CONNECTION WITH SUCH MEDICAL AND DENTAL SERVICES RENDERED TO THE AFOREMENTIONED CHILD PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORIZATION. SHOULD IT BE NECESSARY FOR MY (OUR) CHILD TO RETURN HOME DUE TO MEDICAL REASONS OR OTHERWISE, THE UNDERSIGNED SHALL ASSUME ALL TRANSPORTATION COSTS.

THE UNDERSIGNED DOES ALSO HEREBY GIVE PERMISSION FOR MY (OUR) CHILD TO RIDE IN ANY VEHICLE, WHOSE DRIVER HAS A VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE AND ALSO CAN SHOW PROOF OF AUTO INSURANCE, DESIGNATED BY YOUTH SPONSORS IN WHOSE CARE THE MINOR HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED WHILE ATTENDING AND PARTICIPATING IN ACTIVITIES SPONSORED BY FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

NAME OF MINOR _____ FATHER/GUARDIAN _____

DATE OF LAST TETANUS SHOT _____ MOTHER/GUARDIAN _____

ALLERGIES _____ MEDICATIONS CURRENTLY USED _____

FAMILY PHYSICIAN

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ INSURANCE CO _____

POLICY/MEMBER # _____

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY AND PARENT(S) CANNOT BE REACHED, CONTACT:

NAME _____ RELATIONSHIP _____ PHONE _____

NAME _____ RELATIONSHIP _____ PHONE _____

PARENT(S) / GUARDIAN(S) SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

First Presbyterian Church Parent Permission Form

I am the parent or guardian of _____ (Child's Name) and I hereby give permission for my child to participate in or attend _____ (Activity) on _____ (Date(s) of Activity). I have been advised of and understand the activities planned.

I understand that if I fail to pick up my child at the scheduled time, Church staff are permitted to arrange for another adult to transport the child home.

Furthermore, I understand that my child will be expected to abide by the following guidelines and that failure to do so may result in exclusion from this or future church activities:

1. Children/youth attending church planned activities will be expected to participate, to the degree that they are capable, in the scheduled list of activities.
2. Children/youth will cooperate and comply with behavioral rules and expectations set forth by the adult(s) who are in charge and supervising.
3. The presence of alcohol, tobacco or controlled substances of any kind or any type of weapon will not be tolerated.
4. If a participant does not comply with these expectations, their parent/guardian will be notified immediately. The parent/guardian will remove their child from the church activity upon notification by the supervising adult(s).
5. The schedule of activities, medical release form, permission form, and the behavioral expectation form will be read and signed by the parent/guardian of each child prior to the scheduled activity.

Name

Date

Print Name

Relationship