

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Abuse Prevention Policy

A GUIDE FOR PAID WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS

PURPOSE OF POLICY

The officers, staff, and members of First Presbyterian Church are committed to maintaining a safe environment in which Children and Youth are protected from sexual/physical abuse and neglect in church-sponsored events. The policy applies to individuals who work and/or volunteer in church programs which involve Children and Youth. This policy does not constitute a contract between the church and its workers or the church and any other party. It is merely a statement of policy and general guideline which First Presbyterian Church will seek to follow. First Presbyterian Church makes no guarantee to any party that all aspects of this policy will be followed in any given situation. First Presbyterian Church is not responsible for the individual acts of any worker and/or volunteer.

SELECTION OF CHILD/YOUTH WORKERS

All staff, volunteers, church members and guests who wish to work within First Presbyterian-sponsored programs or events are subject to the guidelines listed in this policy. Each should complete the confidential application form included in this policy. Each individual ministry is responsible for the application review, monitoring, and enforcement for the Children and youth workers in its ministry.

GUIDELINES FOR WORKERS

These guidelines apply to all individuals who work with Children and Youth, including staff, volunteers, church members, and guests. Each division is responsible for making certain that proper supervision is in place for its programs and activities.

A. Any individual member of First Presbyterian Church, staff, and volunteers are eligible to apply to work with Children and Youth. All interested persons are required to complete an application, sign the Worker's Pledge, and be familiar with the policy. Policy training sessions and personal interviews with the program director may also be required.

B. Workers, volunteers, and Youth helpers shall not touch, interact with, or otherwise communicate with in any way that is intended to be sexually stimulating. Common expressions of affection (hugs), affirmation (pats on the back), support (prayers), or physical caretaking (changing diapers, toileting, etc.) are appropriate in the community of caring Christians. Care must be taken, however, that expressions of affection and affirmation are not excessive or imposed upon

a Child/Youth. Care must also be taken that adults do not act in a sexually stimulating way in front of children and youth during any church activity.

C. If two caregivers are not present for any activity on the church premises, classroom doors should be left open.

D. Caregivers who observe questionable or inappropriate behavior affecting Children and Youth must report it as soon as possible to the church administrator who will notify the senior minister or his designee.

E. Adults are encouraged to be sensitive to the potential for abuse and to appearances of abuse. They should not hesitate to caution others if they observe activities which are, or might be, inappropriate.

F. Special attention shall be given to supervision during overnight and off-campus group activities. Two adult Youth advisors or parents should be present at all times when reasonably possible.

Confidential
First Presbyterian Church
Application to Work with Children and Youth
(To be completed by all applicants for any position involving the supervision or custody of minors)

Date _____ First Presbyterian Member Since _____

Name _____ Date of Birth _____
(Print) Last First Middle

Place of Birth _____ Sex: _____ Male _____ Female

Social Security No.: _____ - _____ - _____ Driver's License No.: _____ State Issued _____

Current Address: _____
Street City State and Zip

Years at this Address _____ Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Previous addresses for the past seven (7) years (you may use the back of this page):

List all previous work involving Children and/or Youth; be specific (you may use the back of this page).

Provide at least two (2) personal references, including name, address, and phone number.

Worker's Pledge

I have not been convicted of a Child/Youth sexual/physical abuse crime. I have not been nor am I currently involved in any abuse of a minor. I have received a copy of the First Presbyterian Church Abuse Prevention Policy, have read and understand the policy, and agree to observe all church policies and procedures regarding working with Children and/or Youth.

I understand that First Presbyterian Church may conduct a thorough investigation into my background using all available methods of investigation, including a criminal SLED check and a check of the DSS Child Abuse Registry. I release any of these sources (including First Presbyterian Church) from any liability pertaining to this search.

Date _____

Signature of Individual Authorizing Release