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Child Protection Policies 2020

FOR FAITH-BASED
ORGANIZATIONS

[NAME OF FAITH BASED ORGANIZATION]

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Provided by StopTraffickingUS.org

This original document was reviewed and approved by the [Authority/Council Name] of [Faith Based Organization] on [Date, 2020].

Please note that Stop Trafficking US revised and added to a policy provided by members of GRACE and Sacred Spaces to create this version. For ongoing training, Stop Trafficking US recommends the following sources: netgrace.org; jewishsacredspaces.org; and zeroabuseproject.org.

Document revisions:

Name approved by:	Date:

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INTRODUCTION. A LETTER FROM THE RELIGIOUS LEADER

[EXAMPLE TEMPLATE]

Dear Friends,

[Your Faith Based Organization (FBO)], like other voluntary, religious, educational, and social service organizations, is concerned with difficult and sensitive issues relating to personal ethics and sexual misconduct, especially as these relate to children in our midst. FBOs are by nature trusting institutions, which have traditionally accepted the services of anyone expressing an interest in working as a volunteer with children.

While asking sensitive questions of potential youth workers, teachers or anyone closely involved with our children can be seen as distasteful and offensive, not doing so can make a FBO extremely susceptible to incidents of child abuse or molestation. A single incident involving a child, or even an adult, devastates the individuals involved, and can do the same to the entire FBO community.

Because [Your FBO] is concerned for the welfare of all its members, beginning with the youngest infant, we have worked to create a “Child Protection Policy” which though relatively simple, seeks to take effective steps designed to reduce the likelihood of abuse in our FBO. The goal of this Policy is to assure our FBO is a safe place for children, youth, and all of our members and guests.

To that end, a Child Protection Policy has recently been adopted by our FBO Council. All adults participating in programs involving any contact with children will be required to read the policy and to sign a statement indicating they have done so. We see this as a proactive approach toward protecting our children and the adults that generously give of their time to work with the children. I encourage you to speak with me or [name] if you have questions or comments about the Policy.

Yours,

[Religious Leader's Name]

DATE

SECTION 1. PURPOSE

Children are our sacred trust from a loving God.

[Your FBO] joyfully answers the call to provide a nurturing and dynamic environment that will foster our children's faith, their guiding light. We seek to ensure the safety of all children participating in the programs and activities of the FBO by establishing the following guidelines with regard to the conduct of adults and children.

This Child Protection Policy directs that supervision of activities involving children and adults be conducted in a manner that minimizes the risk of abuse or of false allegations of abuse. We seek to protect the children who participate in the activities sponsored by [Your FBO] from abuse and to protect [Your FBO]'s employees and volunteers from false allegations of abuse. [Your FBO] can, through adherence to this Child Protection Policy, make every effort to ensure that persons placed in positions of responsibility and trust with respect to the children of the FBO, are persons deserving of that trust and responsibility.

This Child Protection Policy shall be available in the FBO office to all visitors, members, and staff of the FBO.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Those who accept the responsibility of working with children at [Your FBO] agree to:

- treat children with respect and dignity;
- do their best to prevent abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children participating in activities;
- not engage in or condone acts of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse;
- comply with [Your FBO]'s Child Protection Policy; and
- report any abuse, inappropriate behaviors, or possible policy violations.

All members, visitors, and guests at [Your FBO] must follow this Policy. We ask anyone using the building, including community groups and others not directly affiliated with the FBO, to acknowledge and comply with this Child Protection Policy. [The Chairs of Education Ministry, Youth Ministry, and the Staff Support Committee], working with the Religious Leader, and the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group], shall assume responsibility for overseeing the Child Protection Policy. Such responsibility includes supervision and implementation of the Policy as well as providing opportunities for education and training about the Policy. The intention of the Child Protection Policy is to protect. The Policy is not intended to substantially interfere with the nurturing, teaching, and supervising of children.

SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy:

Faith Based Organization (FBO): [Your FBO].

Child: any individual under the age of 18.

Child Protection Policy Oversight Group: Individuals responsible for overseeing the Policy, receiving reports of abuse, conducting training, reviewing applications, checking references, requesting background checks, etc., consists of the Religious Leader, Coordinator of Education Ministry, Volunteer Coordinator, and President of the Congregation, as well as other council members requested to serve.

Adult: any person age 18 or older.

Trained Adult (TA): any person age 18 or older, who also has:

- attended a child protection policy training meeting and has a signed Child Protection Policy Acceptance form on file.
- completed pages 1 and 2 of the Application to Work with Children.

Spiritual Leader (Trained Adult with Positively Checked References): any person age 18 or older who has:

- attended a child protection policy training meeting and has a signed Child Protection Policy Acceptance on file.
- completed an application to work with children, including positively checked references.

Lead Spiritual Leader (Trained Adult with Positively Checked References and Background Check with Favorable Results): any person age 18 or older who has:

- attended a child protection policy training meeting and has a signed Child Protection Policy Acceptance on file.
- completed an application to work with children, including references.
- had a background check done with favorable results.

Staff: anyone who works for [Your FBO] for salary or wages.

Volunteer: anyone who provides services for [Your FBO] and receives no compensation in the form of salary, wages, or other pecuniary benefits.

Child Abuse: injury of a child by an adult or older child that is not accidental. It may include physical abuse, verbal abuse, emotional abuse, or sexual abuse.

Child Physical Abuse: non-accidental bodily injury of a child through physical contact or mistreatment.

Child Sexual Abuse: any form of sexual contact or exploitation in which a child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator. It includes behaviors that involve touching and non-touching aspects. Child sexual abuse is criminal behavior that involves children in sexual behaviors for which they are not personally, socially, and developmentally ready.

Types of child sexual abuse that involve touching include, but are not limited to:

- Fondling
- Oral, genital, and anal penetration
- Intercourse
- Forcible rape

Types of child sexual abuse that do not involve touching include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal comments
- Risqué or sexual jokes
- Pornographic videos and photography
- Obscene phone calls
- Exhibitionism
- Allowing children to witness sexual activity

Sexual abuse perpetrated by an adult is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a child and an adult. This includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of the adult or child. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered to be forced whether or not the child consents to it.

Sexual abuse perpetrated by a child is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between children when there is no consent, when consent is not possible, or when one child has power over the other child. This

includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of any of the children.

Child Emotional Abuse: any language directed toward a child by an adult that is intended to cause emotional anxiety, pain, or other severe emotional disturbance. It is mental or emotional injury to a child that results in an observable and material impairment in the child's growth, development, or psychological functioning.

Neglect: the failure to provide for a child's basic needs or the failure to protect a child from harm.

Economic Exploitation: the deliberate misplacement, exploitation, or wrongful temporary or permanent use of a child's belongings or money.

SECTION 3. SUPERVISION GUIDELINES

Two-Adult Guidelines

Generally, two unrelated (e.g., not spouse, sibling, parent or child) adults must be present at all activities involving children. When two related adults are leading or chaperoning activities with children outside of Sunday School/Youth Education and youth activities, at least one additional adult must be present.

- a) **OPEN SPACES:** When many people are in the building (e.g., Sunday mornings) and contact with a child is incidental to what the adult is doing, it is sufficient that the single adult is in an open space (fellowship hall, kitchen, lounge, sanctuary) and anyone can look in on them. [The choir room, upstairs library, and any room with the door shut are not considered open spaces].
- b) **TEENS:** An exception to the two adult guideline is when an adult and at least one teenager (ages 13 to 17) who are not related are watching children in the FBO building during adult classes, potluck dinners, etc.
- c) **QUALIFICATIONS BY ACTIVITY:** For certain types of activities, one or more of the adults should be a Trained Adult, Spiritual Leader, or Lead Spiritual Leader. The chart below illustrates some common categories of activities that require one or more of the adults involved have additional qualifications.
- d) **WORKING ALONE:** If absolutely necessary, an adult may work alone with children only if there is visual access to the room on the main floor of the building, e.g., open door. Prior to working alone with children, the adult must make a reasonable effort to ensure that a second adult is present or that another adult may check in without advance notice. The adult in charge must inform the parents that there is not a second adult present.

If only one adult is present or available, that adult may cancel the event and inform parents that there was not adequate supervision available to have the event.
- e) **RATIOS:** Activity leaders must use good judgment in requiring that an appropriate number of adults participate and in considering the level of qualification for each adult.

Common Categories of Activities

ACTIVITY: Overnights away from FBO

QUALIFICATIONS OF ADULTS:

At least one Lead Spiritual Leader per trip and at least one Spiritual Leader or higher of each gender, one of which may be the required Lead Spiritual Leader.

Other adults attending must be Spiritual Leaders or Lead Spiritual Leaders.

ACCOMMODATIONS & REQUIREMENTS:

Best efforts should be made to ensure that:

- children are given appropriate privacy in the areas of sleeping, changing, and bathing.
- children and adults do not bathe in the same facility at the same time.
- children of the opposite gender do not change or bathe together.
- children of the opposite gender do not sleep in the same room together, unless they are siblings and a parent has requested this sleeping arrangement.
- children of the opposite gender may be permitted to sleep in the same room if an entire group of children along with the supervising adults are sleeping in one big room together. In these group sleepover situations, parents must be informed of the sleeping arrangements in advance and must give explicit permission for their child's participation in the event. The required written permission slip from a parent or guardian must expressly acknowledge that the activity is coed.
- the leader of the overnight activity has an emergency phone number for a parent or guardian of each child participating in the event.

ACTIVITY: Day Trips Away from FBO

QUALIFICATIONS OF ADULTS:

One Lead Spiritual Leader per trip. Other adults are Trained Adult or higher.

ACCOMMODATIONS & REQUIREMENTS:

Best efforts should be made to:

Avoid having one child alone in a car with an adult, unless the adult is the child's parent or guardian.

ACTIVITY: Regular Activities with Children

QUALIFICATIONS OF ADULTS:

All adults regularly interacting with children must be Trained Adult or higher.

ACTIVITY: Sunday School/Youth Education

QUALIFICATIONS OF ADULTS:

As a regular activity with children, Sunday School/Youth Education teachers must be Trained Adult or higher.

Although two adults are generally required for an activity involving children, during Sunday School/Youth Education, when children are attending classes in the spaces separated by dividers in the fellowship hall, it is permissible to have one adult present in each divided space, as long as there are at least two adults (Trained Adult or higher) present in the fellowship hall.

Related adults may work together to teach Sunday School/Youth Education.

ACTIVITY: One-Time Activities

QUALIFICATIONS OF ADULTS:

Adults who work with children must be Trained Adult or higher, to include volunteers.

If an adult repeatedly volunteers with children (substitute teacher chaperone, parent helper, etc.), that adult must become a Trained Adult.

ACTIVITY:

Non-FBO member use of building and non-FBO sponsored building activities

QUALIFICATIONS OF ADULTS:

Provide adult supervision for children; having at least two adults with a group of children.

ACCOMMODATIONS & REQUIREMENTS:

Best efforts should be made to:

Make best efforts to comply with the spirit and intent of the [Your FBO] Child Protection Policy.

Make people in your group aware of the Child Protection Policy.

Personal Conduct

- A. Common expressions of affection (e.g., hugs), affirmation (e.g., pats on the back, high fives), blessings (e.g., making the sign of the cross on the forehead, laying on of hands), support or physical caretaking (e.g., diaper changing), when done without sexual connotations, are appropriate in this community of caring Christians. Expressions of affection shall not be excessive or imposed upon others. No child should be made to feel guilty if they do not wish to participate in these expressions of affection. Children must be made aware that they are free to participate or not, as they feel comfortable. Children must be allowed to use the bathroom on their own with adults verifying that the bathroom is safe (e.g., no unknown adults in the bathroom, etc.) and waiting at the entrance to the bathroom for the child to finish.
- B. Adults shall not touch or interact with children in any way that is intended to be sexually stimulating. Any activity of this type is illegal, as well as a violation of trust.
- C. Adults shall not engage in inappropriate behavior with children. Examples include but are not limited to: seeking private time with children, taking children on outings or overnight trips without other adults, swearing in front of children, or making suggestive comments to children.
- D. Corporal punishment (spanking, slapping, etc.) or verbal abuse is never permitted.

Open Door Policy

All spaces where activities with children are taking place, including but not limited to classrooms, rehearsal spaces, and child care rooms, shall be open to visits at any time without prior notice. These visits should be made in a manner that is not disruptive to the activity. The door to spaces where activities with children are taking place must remain open. If an activity is taking place in multiple locations within the building, the leader of the activity, if possible, should circulate among the locations.

Discipline

All adults leading programs involving contact with children will be guided by the following constructive discipline guidelines in order to maintain order:

- A. If a child is behaving inappropriately, the adult will tell the child specifically what he or she is doing that is not acceptable and state what the expected behavior is,

e.g., “We do not throw blocks. We use blocks for building.” If this is not effective, the child should be guided to another activity.

- B. If inappropriate behavior continues, the child may be placed in an area of the room where he or she will work alone, away from the other students for a brief period of time, the number of minutes not to exceed the age of the child.
- C. If the child's disruptive behavior continues after these steps have been taken, the child may be taken to the parent, **Sunday School/Youth Education Superintendent, Education Ministry Coordinator**, or other responsible adults. If a child must be removed from a classroom or other activity, the situation will be discussed with his or her parents.
- D. If misbehavior occurs at an offsite location, the parent may be called to pick up the child.
- E. In no case is an adult permitted to physically or verbally abuse a child who is misbehaving. There will be no use of corporal punishment.

Permission Slips

Children must have parental or guardian permission in advance to participate in any overnight activity or activity that takes place away from [Your FBO]'s grounds.

Permission must be given in writing and signed and dated by a parent or guardian. The permission slip will identify the name and date of the activity in which the child will be participating, as well as provide a basic description of what will occur.

Transportation

- A. It is recommended that children be transported in groups rather than alone for FBO-sponsored activities. A child's parent or guardian must give permission for an unaccompanied adult to drive a single child or children to or from a FBO-sponsored activity. Parental permission for transportation as part of a planned event must be obtained in writing.
- B. Children legally required to ride in a car seat or booster seat must be transported using the appropriate safety seat. All other passengers must wear a seatbelt while a vehicle is in motion or turned on.
- C. This policy is not intended to prohibit staff or adult volunteers, when two are available to assist, from offering a ride home to children in an emergency situation. The adults should make reasonable attempts to contact parents or guardians prior to providing the ride. The adults providing the ride should inform the child's parents or leave a message stating the expected departure, travel, and arrival times. The child or children should ride in the backseat with

appropriate safety measures depending on the child's age (booster seat and/or seat belt).

- D. No person under the age of 21 shall drive other children as part of a FBO activity.
- E. Every driver must have a valid driver's license and must drive a registered and insured vehicle.
- F. If a group is traveling in one vehicle, there must be two unrelated Trained Adults in the vehicle. If a group is traveling in more than one vehicle, care must be taken so that a single vehicle with one adult driver is not separated from the group for an extended length of time.

Digital Privacy

A key ingredient for any safe and healthy experience is the respect for privacy.

Advances in technology have enabled forms of social interaction that can extend beyond the appropriate use of cameras, recording devices, and handheld electronics.

- A. To ensure full participation and the opportunity for a positive experience, children may be prohibited from bringing handheld electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, laptops, iPads, tablets, etc.) to youth events or other FBO-sponsored functions. If children do bring these items to a FBO event, the adults in charge of the event may require that the items be placed in a box or other location away from the children for the duration of the event and then returned to the children at the conclusion of the event.
- B. Children and adults shall not view or send sexually explicit or suggestive texts, images, videos, or other inappropriate content electronically. Children and adults shall not view or post sexually explicit materials on websites or social media sites.
- C. Children and adults can opt out of having their photos appear on the [Your FBO] website, social media, or other publications.

SECTION 4. APPLICATION, SCREENING AND TRAINING GUIDELINES

Application Process

All adults who seek to work with children at [Your FBO] must attend a Child Protection Policy training session, complete an application to work with children, and sign the Child Protection Policy acceptance statement. All adults who would like to work with children on a regular basis or plan and lead events must complete an Application to Work with Children, will have their names run in a registered sex offenders' database, and in some cases submit to a background check. The application requests information about the applicant's suitability to work with children and asks for references that can verify the applicant's experience with children. Please see the "Qualifications by Activity" table in Section 3 to determine the level of information requested for the position sought.

Screening and Background Checks

- A. Applications are reviewed and an in-person interview must be conducted with one or more members of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group. Applicants may also be asked to participate in an oral screening to determine suitability for work with children. Applications and related papers are confidential and maintained in locked files with access limited to the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group.
- B. [Your FBO] will use its discretion in reviewing and investigating the history of each applicant and in determining the activities for which a criminal background check is required. In general, any adult, both staff and volunteer, who will regularly have significant contact with children, be with children off the FBO property, chaperone overnight events, work in the nursery, or serve as youth group leaders may be asked to submit to a criminal background check as well as checks with the Department of Health and Human Services
- C. Updated criminal background checks must be performed every 2 years, at a minimum. [Your FBO] may request the following information when conducting a background check:
 - Social Security identification
 - County courthouse check
 - Nationwide criminal check
 - Driving record

The cost of the background check will be paid for by [Your FBO].

- D. [Your FBO] must conduct a registered sex offender review for all applicants by searching the individual's name on the Department of Justice website at www.nsopr.gov. The registered sex offender review may be repeated at various times throughout the individual's service as an employee or volunteer who works with or comes into contact with children. At a minimum, a check must be conducted annually.
- E. There will be a procedure for reviewing background checks and other sensitive information from references, oral screening, sex offender review, the application, etc.
- a) Types of information that may merit additional consideration include but are not limited to: criminal acts and criminal behavior, sex crimes, financial crimes, and drug crimes.
 - b) When the background check (or other information) is received, at least two members of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group will review it. Each background check is considered individually and all decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. Child Protection Policy Oversight Group members will be reminded of the sensitive and confidential nature of the information they possess and asked that any discussions about the information be limited to the confidential Group meetings.
 - i) If no information of concern is contained in the report, the applicant will be able to work with children.
 - ii) If there are any concerns, a meeting is called with three members of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group to discuss the report and a decision will be made by vote. Written Minutes of this meeting will be kept with the application materials.
 - 1) If an individual will not be allowed to work with children, the Religious Leader or the Religious Leader's designee will arrange a personal meeting with the individual to deliver the news with one additional Child Protection Policy Oversight Group member present.
 - 2) If an individual is allowed to work with children, the Coordinator of Education Ministry (or designee) will deliver the news.
 - c) Applicants deemed by [Your FBO] to pose a threat to children will not be permitted to participate in [Your FBO]'s activities for children and must be required to be with an assigned chaperone when participating in general FBO activities where children may be present.

- F. All individuals serving on the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group must follow all of these procedures and be subject to the same checks as adults who will be interacting with children. For example, all Child Protection Policy Group members must fill out an application, have their references checked, be checked in the database of registered sex offenders, and have a criminal background check conducted. All documentation will be checked and verified with other members of the group.

Training

- A. We encourage all adults of the congregation to attend a Child Protection Policy training to better understand the goals of the policy and help to safeguard our children and the adults working with children. All adults seeking to work regularly with children must be trained on the requirements of [Your FBO]'s Child Protection Policy. A signed Child Protection Policy Acceptance Statement will be evidence of completion of training. Adults working with children must retake the training periodically.
- B. Communication about and an explanation of the Child Protection Policy will be included annually in all training and orientation for programs at [Your FBO] involving contact with children. The responsibility for ensuring the Child Protection Policy is included as part of training programs shall rest with the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group.

SECTION 5. SIGNS OF CHILD ABUSE

Identify at risk children! One step in helping abused or neglected children is to recognize the warning signs. Report any suspected physical abuse, medical neglect, mental abuse or sexual abuse inflicted upon a child by caretakers.

No one symptom alone proves child abuse, but when they appear often, or in combination with other symptoms, adults need to report them.

It may be physical abuse when you see a child with:

- Questionable burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, welts or black eyes.
- Fading bruises or other marks after an absence from school.

It may be physical abuse when the parent or other caregiver:

- Offers an unconvincing explanation for an injury.
- Describes the child as "bad" or "stupid."
- Uses harsh physical discipline.

It may be physical neglect when a child:

- Steals food or money from classmates, often seems hungry.
- Lacks medical or dental care.
- Says that no one is home to care for him.
- Lacks proper clothing for the weather.
- Often appears dirty or tired.

It may be physical neglect when a parent or caregiver:

- Abuses alcohol or drugs.
- Appears indifferent to a child's needs.
- Seems apathetic or depressed.
- Consistently fails to keep important appointments or to take medicines.

It may be emotional abuse or neglect when the child:

- Displays self-destructive behavior, like cutting or burning himself.
- Becomes overly compliant and passive or extremely demanding and aggressive.
- Acts inappropriately adult-like (such as parenting other children) or inappropriately infantile (such as frequent rocking or head banging).
- Can't make or keep friends.

It may be emotional abuse or neglect when the caregiver:

- Constantly puts down or blames a child.
- Rejects the child outright.

- Makes unreasonable demands on the child without regard to his abilities or developmental level.
- Gets defensive or refuses to consider help for the child's school problems.

It may be sexual abuse when the child:

- Can't walk or sit easily.
- Has injuries or redness around the genitals.
- Displays unusual sexual knowledge or behavior, such as being seductive.
- Withdraws, seems depressed or can't get along with peers.
- Abuses drugs or alcohol.
- Has unexplained money or gifts.
- Expresses thoughts of suicide and low self-worth.

It may be sexual abuse when the parent or caregiver:

- Was sexually abused as a child himself.
- Abuses drugs or alcohol.
- Lacks social and emotional contacts outside his family.
- Restricts a child's contact with those of the opposite sex.

Following are some additional common signs of child sexual abuse that may warrant reporting:

Physical Signs:

- Unusual lacerations and bruises,
- Difficulty with urination,
- Torn or bloody underclothing,
- Venereal disease.

Behavioral Signs:

- A sudden change in behavior
- Nervous or hostile behavior toward adults
- Avoiding a person or situation that the child would normally have been involved in, Sexual self-consciousness
- "Acting out" of sexual behavior

Verbal Signs:

- "_____ does things to me when we're alone",
- "I don't like to be alone with _____,"
- "_____ fooled around with me,"
- "_____ says mean things to me."

For additional information, you can read “Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect: Signs and Symptoms” published by the Child Welfare Information Gateway and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, found online at <http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/signs.pdf>.

SECTION 6. REPORTING AND RESPONDING

In maintaining our protection of children, adults must report abuse, suspected abuse, or neglect. A person may suspect abuse by noting signs of abuse, being told of abuse, or witnessing conduct that is of concern.

Do not hesitate to report abuse. When you report what you have seen or heard, you may help a child to stay safe. If you have noticed the warning signs of abuse and neglect, you must report it. If you do not report your suspicions, the abuse of a child might continue. You should have a reasonable suspicion of the abuse, but you do not have to "prove" the abuse or be positive that it occurred. If you report in good faith, you are immune from civil or criminal liability.

Please note that under the State of Maine's Department of Health and Human Services statute, subsection 9, the law states, "A person required to make a report under subsection 1 shall complete at least once every 4 years mandated reporter training approved by the department." For additional useful information regarding Maine's mandated reporter laws, please visit the DHHS website at: <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/mandated-reporters.shtml>.

[NOTE: THIS IS FOR THE STATE OF MAINE. PLEASE VISIT YOUR CITY'S/STATE'S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES OR CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES FOR REPORTING AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS SPECIFIC TO YOUR AREA].

Reporting and Documentation

- A. If the child is in immediate danger or there is an emergency situation, call 911.
- B. If you suspect that a child is physically, sexually, or emotionally abused or neglected, call the **State of Maine** Child Protective Services at 1-800-452-1999 [or your city/state's Child Protective Services at Phone #], as soon as possible. It is not necessary to confirm that child abuse or neglect has occurred, only that abuse or neglect is suspected. Authorities will fully investigate the suspicion.
- C. All knowledge about abuse or suspected abuse must also be shared, as soon as possible, with at least two members of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group.
- D. If inappropriate behavior or policy violations are observed that warrant concern but do not involve abuse, a member of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group must be notified.

- E. Misconduct by a rostered member of the ordained clergy or rostered lay person in this congregation shall be promptly reported to the office of the Highest FBO Governing Authority, [Phone #] and as required by [Your State Here] law.
- F. Please document what you have seen and to whom you have reported it. The Reporting and Responding Documentation Form (Appendix G) may be used to document details of abuse, suspected abuse, inappropriate behavior, or non-abuse policy violations. As soon as possible give a copy of any documentation to a member of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group.
- G. It is [Your FBO]'s policy to report child abuse to the appropriate governmental authority, as required by state law and FBO regulations. [Your FBO] will cooperate fully with government authorities in the investigations of allegations of child abuse.
- H. Any concerned person may report suspicions of child abuse and neglect to the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group, local government or law enforcement authorities. Reports may be made confidentially or anonymously. Every state provides immunity from civil liability for persons who report suspected abuse in good faith and without malice. "In good faith" means that the person submitting the report believes what he or she is reporting to be true.

Responding

All persons involved in reporting or documenting any alleged incident of abuse should hold information in confidence, subject only to such disclosures as are required under FBO procedures and as necessary to facilitate investigation of allegations of abuse and resolution of the situation.

- A) The Child Protection Policy Oversight Group will maintain a confidential written record of each report of abuse received. All written records should be maintained in a secure area where it is locked in a drawer or filing cabinet with access to only those needing it such as the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group.
- B) The Child Protection Policy Oversight Group will determine a response which may include the alleged perpetrator being:
 - 1) asked to meet with some or all of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group to discuss the situation. At least two members of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group need to be present.
 - 2) removed from any position involving contact with children at [Your FBO] until the allegation is resolved.

- 3) asked to refrain from activities involving contact with children for a specified period of time or indefinitely, depending on the nature of the behavior.
 - 4) reported to Child Protective Services and/or the police.
 - 5) required to have an assigned escort (designated member of the congregation) any time he or she is at [Your FBO].
- C) The Religious Leader or Religious Leader's designee (from the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group) must notify parents or guardians of alleged victims and those accused of allegations, as necessary, and must make proper reports to government and law enforcement authorities. If the Religious Leader is the perpetrator, a member of Child Protection Policy Oversight Group will assume those responsibilities.
- D) If abuse occurs, a designated spokesperson for [Your FBO], generally a member of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group will (with appropriate legal guidance) inform the congregation about the situation when appropriate to do so (i.e., disclosure of the situation will not jeopardize the investigation or cause undue hardship to the victim and accused), protecting the identities of those involved as needed, to avoid rumors and the spread of false information. If an investigation is being conducted by law enforcement, the designated spokesperson will receive authorization from law enforcement prior to disclosing any information about the situation to the congregation.

REPORTING ABUSE – SUMMARY OF WHO TO CONTACT AND WHAT TO DO

Immediate danger or emergency situation

1. Call 911 to notify police of situation and request help.
2. Take all steps necessary to ensure the child's immediate safety.
3. Notify the child's parent or guardian, if not present, of the situation, actions taken and where the child is currently located.
4. As soon as possible, contact a member of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group to report what has occurred.
5. Document what was observed and reported. You may use the Reporting and Responding Documentation Form (Appendix G).

6. Give the documentation to a member of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group as soon as possible.

Suspected abuse or neglect

1. Call State of Maine Child Protective Services, 1-800-452-1999, (or your state's CPS if you're not in Maine) to make a report.
2. Take all steps necessary to ensure the child's immediate safety.
3. As soon as possible, contact a member of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group to report what has occurred.
4. Document what was observed and reported. You may use the Reporting and Responding Documentation Form (Appendix G).
5. Give the documentation to a member of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group as soon as possible.

Observe inappropriate behavior or policy violations that warrant concern but are not abuse

1. Call one of the members of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group to share your concern.
2. Document what was observed. You may use the Reporting and Responding Documentation Form (Appendix G).
3. Give the documentation to one of the members of Child Protection Policy Oversight Group as soon as possible.

APPENDIX A: IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

To Report Abuse or Suspected Abuse

Police Emergency Phone Number	911
Police Non-Emergency 24-Hour Phone Number (City of _____):	[Phone #]
City/State of _____ Child Protective Services, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day: (Note: Maine law requires suspected abuse be reported to the State.)	[Phone #]
State Hot Line to Report Child Abuse:	Maine: 1-800-452-1999

To Contact FBO Staff, Officers, and Child Protection Policy Oversight Group (CPPOG) Members

Religious Leader	[Phone #]
[etc. FBO Staff/CPPOG member]	[Phone #]
[etc. FBO Staff/CPPOG member]	[Phone #]
[etc. FBO Staff/CPPOG member]	[Phone #]
[etc. FBO Staff/CPPOG member]	[Phone #]
[etc. FBO Staff/CPPOG member]	[Phone #]
Contact information for Highest Authority Governing FBO	[Phone #]

ChildHelp National Child Abuse Hotline

The Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline	1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)
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The Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline is dedicated to the prevention of child abuse. Serving the United States, its territories, and Canada, the Hotline is staffed **24 hours a day, 7 days a week** with professional crisis counselors who, through interpreters, can provide assistance in 170 languages. The Hotline offers crisis intervention, information, literature, and referrals to thousands of emergency, social service, and support resources. **All calls are anonymous and confidential.**

Online Resources

Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public <i>*Includes a national sex offender search feature.</i>	www.nsopr.gov .
State Criminal Records and Sex Offenders Registry Information	[PLACE WEBSITE ADDRESS FOR YOUR STATE HERE]
Maine Statutes on Reporting Child Abuse	Title 15 M.R.S.A. §4011-A

APPENDIX B. WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN CALLING CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES

(City or State of _____) (include information from website as applicable)

(Note: Maine has no city level child protective services, only state level which is through the Department of Health and Human Services.)

Child Protective Services (CPS) is established by the [city/state applicable statute or code] to receive and respond to concerns of abuse or neglect of children.

Any concerned resident who suspects that a child is abused or neglected should call [local phone#], or the State Hotline at [Phone #].

You are free to call and discuss concerns anonymously. Please provide as much information as possible about your concerns and the identity of the child. (Appendix G can be filled out to help with details.)

If a child is in immediate danger, call 911 for police assistance.

Actions taken by CPS are regulated to provide families with respect and fairness. Decisions and service plans are subject to review by supervisors and by the court. Dispositions of investigations may be appealed by the alleged perpetrator of abuse.

What Should I Do When I Suspect Child Abuse or Neglect?

You can call 1-800-452-1999 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to report your suspicions.

Don't hesitate. When you report what you've seen or heard, you may help a child to stay safe. If you've noticed the warning signs of abuse and neglect, please call. If you don't report your suspicions, the abuse of a child might continue.

You should have a reasonable suspicion of the abuse, but you don't have to "prove" the abuse or be positive that it occurred. If you report in good faith, you are immune from civil or criminal liability.

Do I have to give my name?

No, but eyewitness accounts about the suspected abuse will help the professional staff handle each situation effectively. Usually the name of the person making the report will be known only if court testimony is involved.

After I report my suspicions, then what happens?

Child Protective Services (CPS) investigates the situation to determine the risks to a child. If a case is "founded" (the abuse is verified), then caseworkers will recommend an action plan to protect the child.

Will I be told what happens?

No. To protect everybody involved, confidentiality rules are strictly enforced.

Do you suspect child abuse or neglect? Call 1-800-452-1999.

APPENDIX C. CHILD PROTECTION POLICY ACCEPTANCE STATEMENT – SAMPLE

Please read the copy of the [Your FBO] *Child Protection Policy* provided to you. Please sign below to indicate that you have read and understood the Policy and agree to comply with the policies and procedures outlined therein when working with children.

I, (print name) _____, accept the responsibility to nurture the

I have read and understood the [Your FBO] Child Protection Policy and accept it. I promise to exhibit appropriate behavior and conduct when working with children. I hereby affirm that I have not resigned from or been terminated from a position for reasons relating to abuse or misconduct, as defined in the Policy statement. I further affirm that I am not a registered sex offender, nor do I have any pending or resolved cases with the civil authorities concerning the welfare of children. I affirm that I will not use my position of trust in the FBO to abuse or harm any child. I HAVE READ and UNDERSTAND and AGREE TO ABIDE BY the Child Protection Policy of [Your FBO].

Signature: _____ Date: _____

FIRST NAME		LAST NAME	
MAILING ADDRESS			
CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE	
TELEPHONE #			
HOME:	CELL:	WORK:	
EMAIL ADDRESS			

APPENDIX D. [YOUR FBO] APPLICATION TO WORK WITH CHILDREN

DATE OF APPLICATION:	
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This application is a confidential part of a process to help the FBO provide a safe, nurturing environment for our children. Persons responsible for the supervision and care of our children are in a special position of trust and confidence. Therefore, persons seeking to work with children at [Your FBO] are asked to complete this application.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

(Please show photo identification when submitting form, e.g., driver's license.)

FIRST NAME		LAST NAME	
MAILING ADDRESS			
CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE	
TELEPHONE #			
HOME:	CELL:	WORK:	
EMAIL ADDRESS		DATE OF BRITH (MM/DD/YYYY)	
How long have you been attending [Your FBO], [City, State]?			
Are you 18 years or older?			YES NO
Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offense?			YES NO
Have you ever been charged with or convicted of child neglect?			YES NO
Have you ever been charged with or convicted of physical or sexual abuse of children or adults?			YES NO
Have you plead guilty or "no contest" to any neglect or abuse offense?			YES NO
Have any complaints or allegations of misconduct involving children ever been made against you?			YES NO

1) If you answered “YES” to any of the questions 3 through 8, please explain, including in which state the conviction or charge occurred (use the back side of this application or a separate sheet of paper, as needed):

2) **FBO OR YOUTH WORK EXPERIENCE**

List previous work, paid or volunteer, involving young people. Please provide the organization and location, type of work, and approximate dates.

3) Please share your talents and strengths in working with young people.

Personal references

Please furnish personal references from FBOs, schools, community and civic organizations where past work with children was done, if there is no previous work with children, include other volunteer work or activities.

Reference #1

NAME

TELEPHONE

POSITION OF PERSON NAMED ABOVE

ADDRESS

TYPE OF WORK DONE

Reference #2

NAME

TELEPHONE

POSITION OF PERSON NAMED ABOVE

ADDRESS

TYPE OF WORK DONE

Reference #3

NAME

TELEPHONE

POSITION OF PERSON NAMED ABOVE

ADDRESS

TYPE OF WORK DONE

[Your FBO] Application to Work with Children

I understand that the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group of [Your FBO] may contact the references I have provided as part of the process of reviewing this application. I hereby release from any liability any person or organization that provides information. I certify that the information I have provided is true and correct.

APPLICANTS SIGNATURE	DATE
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RECEIVED BY	DATE
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APPENDIX E. BACKGROUND CHECK AUTHORIZATION FORM

I hereby authorize _____ on behalf of [Your FBO], [City, State], to procure a consumer report which I understand may include the following information:

- Social Security identification
- County courthouse check
- Nationwide criminal check
- Driving record

FIRST NAME		LAST NAME	
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER		DATE OF BIRTH	
CURRENT STREET ADDRESS			
CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE	
HOME PHONE		CELL PHONE	
EMAIL			
CURRENT CONGREGATION NAME			
CITY		STATE	
PREVIOUS ADDRESSES (including county of residence)			

SIGNATURE

DATE

Background Verification Disclosure

[Your FBO] will obtain an investigative consumer report. The investigative consumer report may include information regarding your character, general reputation, personal characteristics or mode of living. The following Consumer Reporting Agency will be asked to prepare the report:

NAME OF AGENCY

ADDRESS OF AGENCY

APPENDIX F. REFERENCE CHECK FORM **CONFIDENTIAL**

APPLICANT NAME
REFERENCE CONTACTED
NAME OF PERSON CONTACTING THIS REFERENCE
METHOD OF CONTACT: telephone, letter, personal conversation

"Hello, my name is _____ and I am contacting you on behalf of [Your FBO] in [City, State]. (Name of applicant) _____ applied to work with children at [Your FBO], listed you as a reference, and gave us written permission to contact you. Would you please answer the following questions to the best of your ability? This should only take a few minutes and is very important to our FBO programs. Thank you."

QUESTIONS:

- A. How long have you known the applicant?
- B. In what capacity?
- C. Based on your experience, would you say that the applicant would work well with children? Why or why not?
 - Prekindergarten:
 - Grades K to 6:
 - Junior high:
 - Senior high:
- D) Would you entrust your child to this person?
- E) Are you aware of any problems that would affect his/her work with children?

Are you aware of any allegations of child abuse?

Any other comments?

SIGNATURE

DATE

APPENDIX G. REPORTING AND RESPONDING DOCUMENTATION FORM - PAGE 1

Name of person providing information:	
Name of person recording information (if applicable):	
Individual of concern:	
Name of child involved:	
Date and time of occurrence:	

Type of concern:

- ☐ Inappropriate behavior with a child
- ☐ Non-abuse policy violation with a child
- ☐ Possible risk of abuse
- ☐ Suspected abuse
- ☐ Observed abuse
- ☐ Other concern:

Please describe the situation. Attach additional sheets as needed.

a) What happened?

b) Where did it happen?

c) When did it happen?

d) Who was involved?

e) Who else was present?

- f) Did anyone else observe the behavior of concern?
- g) Was the parent of the child present?
- h) Did the parent observe the behavior of concern?
- i) What was the parent's reaction?
- j) If the parent was not present, do you know if the parent has been notified?
☐ Yes ☐ No
- k) Was the incident reported to the police or 911? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- l) Was the incident reported to child protective services? ☐ Yes ☐ No
 - i. If reported to the police or child protective services, what was their response and recommended course of action?

Who from the FBO was contacted?

- ☐ Religious Leader
 ☐ Coordinator of Education Ministry
 ☐ Volunteer Coordinator
 ☐ President of the congregation
 ☐ Other (name _____)

To your knowledge, has this type of situation happened before? If so, please describe what you know.

If so, do you know what, if any, action was taken? Who was involved? Who was questioned?

Do you know if police or child protective services were called for the earlier situation?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Have you spoken to anyone else about this incident? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If so, who?

Would you like someone to call you to discuss this situation?

☐ Yes ☐ No

I certify the above information is true to the best of my knowledge. If report was given verbally please have both the person providing the information and the person taking notes sign, if possible.

SIGNED

DATE

SIGNED

DATE

REPORTING AND RESPONDING DOCUMENTATION FORM – PAGE 4

For Office Use Only

Adapted from: Model Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth—April 2004

Name of person being interviewed for this report:	
Name of person recording information:	
Date report was taken:	

Questions below are to be answered by the person who received the reported information (p. 1 and 2)

To your knowledge, has this type of situation happened before? If so, please describe what you know.

If so, do you know what, if any, action was taken? Who was involved? Who was questioned?

Do you know if police or child protective services were called for the earlier situation?

☐ Yes ☐ No

What is the follow-up plan?

Does anyone else need to be notified?

Will the situation need monitoring?

Report taken and submitted by:	
Telephone number:	
Address:	

I certify the above information to be true to the best of my knowledge.

SIGNED

DATE

APPENDIX H.

ADULT PARTICIPATION AND EXPECTATIONS

Thanks for volunteering your time and energy to the [Your FBO] youth. If you have any questions about the event you are attending, please ask so we can clarify. We will provide as much information about the event as is available through emails and conversation. One of the main purposes of youth events is to provide an opportunity for caring adults to connect with youth and to build relationships that will last beyond the end of the event.

EXPECTATIONS:

- Complete child protection training.
- Complete pages 1 and 2 of the Application to Work with Children
- Sign the Child Protection Policy Acceptance Statement.
- Complete an application for a background check if you will be staying overnight with the youth.
- Attend any pre-event meetings, if scheduled.
- Help with event preparations such as planning, shopping, etc.
- Participate with the youth during the entire duration of the event or trip.
- Be a triple-A adult—authentic, available, and affirming.
- Try your best to meet and engage all youth equally.
- Be on time to all scheduled meetings, happenings, etc.
- Participate in all scheduled happenings. If you feel comfortable leading a prayer, devotion, etc., please do so.

Thank You! Have Fun!

APPENDIX I. [YOUR FBO] WEBSITE PHOTO OPT-OUT FORM

I, _____, do not want my photo to appear on the [Your FBO] website. I also do not want the photos of these family members to be used on the [Your FBO] website:

I understand that all efforts will be made to ensure that these photos do not appear, though sometimes in group shots where it is hard to distinguish individuals, we may not be able to identify people well and choose to use a photo containing one of these individuals on the site. All efforts will be made to follow this directive. This photo opt-out form will remain in effect until a request is made to rescind this directive. If we have accidentally posted a photo including one of the individuals listed above, please contact the FBO office for removal of the photo. Please attach photos of the above-listed individuals to this sheet for identification purposes. These photos will not be released.

PRINT NAME

SIGNED

DATE