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GETTYSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

Number 5.43
Subject Child Protection Policy
Effective Date 4/17/2013
Revised 4/24/2019; 10/20/2021
Committee Personnel Committee

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. Mission Statement	2
B. Definitions	2
1. Child Abuse: Child Protective Services Law	2
2. Child Protection Policy Definitions	6
C. Process to Become an Approved Adult	7
D. Minor Employees	8
E. Mandated Reporters	8
F. Forms & Descriptions	9
G. Appropriate Behavior Guidelines	9
H. Reporting Suspected Child Abuse	12
I. Response to Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse	14
J. Personnel Committee Responsibilities	15
K. Violations of the Child Protection Policy	15

APPENDICES

Approved Adult Application Packet includes:

A – Application

- Application & Questions
- Child Protection Covenant & Volunteer Policy
- Driver Information

B – Clearance Instructions

- PA Criminal History Record
- PA Child Abuse Certification
- FBI Fingerprints

Complete only if applicant hasn't lived in PA for 10 continuous years

C – Disclosure Statement Application for Volunteers/Waiver for FBI Fingerprints

Complete if applicant has lived in PA for 10 continuous years

D – Resources & Definitions and Training & Education

E – Form: CY-47 Report of Suspected Child Abuse

Youth Registration & Form Templates for Youth Minister & Youth Committee

J – Youth Ministry Participation Agreement & Registration

K – Youth Group Covenant

L – Permission Slip Templates

- Event Permission Slip
- Gettysburg Area School District Transportation Permission Slip

M – Sign-In Templates

- Volunteer Sign-In
- Parent/Child Sign-In
- Drivers Log

Clearance Instructions with pictures of forms for hand-written submission

X – Application Instructions: Pennsylvania Criminal History Record

Y – Application Instructions: Child Abuse History Certification

Z – Application Instructions: FBI Fingerprints

A. Mission Statement Regarding This Child Protection Policy (CPP)

This congregation’s ministry with children and youth begins by striving to provide a safe environment and to provide caring and effective leaders. In an effort to promote this safe environment, the congregation binds itself to the Child Protection Policy described in this document.

To protect the safety of our children and youth, employees and volunteers will be screened for their acceptability for working with children and youth.

They will be required to

- obtain background certifications in accordance with state law,
- subscribe to our “Two Approved Adult Rule,” and
- follow the guidelines set forth in this Child Protection Policy.

Application forms to become an Approved Adult are located in the Appendix of this document.

B. Definitions

1. Child Abuse: Child Protective Services Law (CSPL):

Child Abuse is intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly doing any of the following:

- 1) Causing bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- 2) Fabricating, feigning or intentionally exaggerating, or inducing a medical symptom or disease which results in a potentially harmful medical evaluation or treatment to the child through any recent act.
- 3) Causing or substantially contributing to serious mental injury to a child through any act or failure to act or a series of such acts or failures to act.
- 4) Causing sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any act or failure to act.
- 5) Creating a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- 6) Creating a likelihood of sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any recent act or failure to act.
- 7) Causing serious physical neglect of a child.
- 8) Engaging in any of the following recent acts:

- i. Kicking, biting, throwing, burning, stabbing, or cutting a child in a manner that endangers the child.
 - ii. Unreasonably restraining or confining a child, based on consideration of the method, location, or the duration of the restraint or confinement.
 - iii. Forcefully shaking a child.
 - iv. Forcefully slapping or otherwise striking a child.
 - v. Interfering with the breathing of a child.
 - vi. Causing a child to be present at a location while a violation of 18 Pa.C.S. § 7508.2 (relating to operation of methamphetamine laboratory) is occurring, provided that the violation is being investigated by law enforcement.
 - vii. Leaving a child unsupervised with an individual, other than the child's parent, who the actor knows or reasonably should have known:
 - a) Is required to register as a Tier II or Tier III sexual offender under 42 Pa.C.S. Ch. 97 Subch. H (relating to registration of sexual offenders), where the victim of the sexual offense was under 18 years of age when the crime was committed.
 - b) Has been determined to be a sexually violent predator under 42 Pa.C.S. § 9799.24 (relating to assessments) or any of its predecessors.
 - c) Has been determined to be a sexually violent delinquent child as defined in 42 Pa.C.S. § 9799.12 (relating to definitions).
- 9) Causing the death of the child through any act or failure to act. 23 Pa.C.S.A. §6303

Child Abuse DOES NOT include:

a) Environmental factors

No child shall be deemed to be physically or mentally abused based on injuries that result solely from environmental factors, such as inadequate housing, furnishings, income, clothing, and medical care, that are beyond the control of the parent or person responsible for the child's welfare with whom the child resides. This subsection shall not apply to any child-care service as defined in this chapter, excluding an adoptive parent.

b) Practice of religious beliefs

If, upon investigation, the county agency determines that a child has not been provided needed medical or surgical care because of sincerely held religious beliefs of the child's parents or relative within the third degree of consanguinity and with whom the child resides, which beliefs are consistent with those of a bona fide religion, the child shall not be deemed to be physically or mentally abused. In such cases the following shall apply:

- 1. The county agency shall closely monitor the child and the child's family and shall seek court-ordered medical intervention when the lack of medical or surgical care threatens the child's life or long-term health.
- 2. All correspondence with a subject of the report and the records of the department and the county agency shall not reference child abuse and shall acknowledge the religious basis for the child's condition.
- 3. The family shall be referred for general protective services, if appropriate.
- 4. This subsection shall not apply if the failure to provide needed medical or surgical care causes the death of the child.

5. This subsection shall not apply to any child-care service as defined in this chapter, excluding an adoptive parent.

c) Use of force for supervision, control, and safety purposes

Subject to subsection (d), the use of reasonable force on or against a child by the child's own parent or person responsible for the child's welfare shall not be considered child abuse if any of the following conditions apply:

- 1) The use of reasonable force constitutes incidental, minor, or reasonable physical contact with the child or other actions that are designed to maintain order and control.
- 2) The use of reasonable force is necessary:
 - i. to quell a disturbance or remove the child from the scene of a disturbance that threatens physical injury to persons or damage to property
 - ii. to prevent the child from self-inflicted physical harm
 - iii. for self-defense or the defense of another individual; or
 - iv. to obtain possession of weapons or other dangerous objects or controlled substances or paraphernalia that are on the child or within the control of the child.

d) Rights of Parents

Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to restrict the generally recognized existing rights of parents to use reasonable force on or against their children for the purposes of supervision, control, and discipline of their children. Such reasonable force shall not constitute child abuse.

e) Participation in events that involve physical contact with child

An individual participating in a practice or competition in an interscholastic sport, physical education, a recreational activity, or an extracurricular activity that involves physical contact with a child does not, in itself, constitute contact that is subject to the reporting requirements of this chapter.

f) Child-on-child contact

1. Harm or injury to a child that results from the act of another child shall not constitute child abuse unless the child who caused the harm or injury is a perpetrator.
2. Notwithstanding paragraph (1), the following shall apply:
 - i. Acts constituting any of the following crimes against a child shall be subject to the reporting requirements of this chapter:
 - A. rape as defined in 18 Pa.C.S. § 3121 (relating to rape)
 - B. involuntary deviate sexual intercourse as defined in 18 Pa.C.S. § 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse)
 - C. sexual assault as defined in 18 Pa.C.S. § 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault)
 - D. aggravated indecent assault as defined in 18 Pa.C.S. § 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault)

- E. indecent assault as defined in 18 Pa.C.S. § 3126 (relating to indecent assault)
- F. indecent exposure as defined in 18 Pa.C.S. § 3127 (relating to indecent exposure)
- ii. No child shall be deemed to be a perpetrator of child abuse based solely on physical or mental injuries caused to another child in the course of a dispute, fight, or scuffle entered into by mutual consent.
- iii. A law enforcement official who receives a report of suspected child abuse is not required to make a report to the department under section 6334(a) (relating to disposition of complaints received), if the person allegedly responsible for the child abuse is a nonperpetrator child.

g) Defensive force

Reasonable force for self-defense or the defense of another individual, consistent with the provisions of 18 Pa.C.S. §§ 505 (relating to use of force in self-protection) and 506 (relating to use of force for the protection of other persons), shall not be considered child abuse.

23 Pa.C.S.A. §6304.

“Sexual Abuse or Exploitation” is any of the following:

1. The employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of a child to engage in or assist another individual to engage in sexually explicit conduct, which includes, but is not limited to, the following.
 - i. Looking at the sexual or other intimate parts of a child or another individual for the purpose of arousing or gratifying sexual desire in any individual.
 - ii. Participating in sexually explicit conversation either in person, by telephone, by computer, or by a computer-aided device for the purpose of sexual stimulation or gratification of any individual.
 - iii. Actual or simulated sexual activity or nudity for the purpose of sexual stimulation or gratification of any individual.
 - iv. Actual or simulated sexual activity for the purpose of producing visual depiction, including photographing, videotaping, computer depicting, or filming.

This paragraph does not include consensual activities between a child who is 14 years of age or older and another person who is 14 years of age or older and whose age is within four years of the child's age.

23 Pa.C.S.A. §6303

2. Child Protection Policy Definitions

Child or Youth is any person who is under 18 years of age. A person who is incompetent is considered to be a child under this Policy irrespective of his/her age.

Lead Pastor (LP) is the pastor or senior pastor under “call” to the congregation. In the absence of a “called” pastor or lead pastor the Congregation Council shall appoint a pastor (associate, interim, etc.) to be the Lead Pastor until a “called” pastor or lead pastor assumes his/her duties in the congregation.

Personnel Committee is the panel of congregational leaders who are responsible for implementing and overseeing the Child Protection Policy. The panel’s composition and duties are outlined in Section J of this Policy. The members of this committee are selected in accordance with the policies, procedures, bylaws, and constitution of the congregation.

Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) The legislative enactment of the Pennsylvania General Assembly which is codified at 23 Pa.C.S.A. §6301, et. seq.

Volunteer is anyone who provides services for the church, who receives no compensation in the form of salary, wages, or benefits, and who routinely interacts with children to provide for their care, education, supervision, guidance, or control.

Youth Volunteer (YV) is anyone under 18 years of age who works under the supervision of two Approved Adults and who routinely interacts with children to provide for their care, education, supervision, guidance, or control

Approved Adult (AA) is anyone over 18 years of age who has satisfied all the requirements of the Child Protection Policy, the application procedure for Approved Adults, and the Pennsylvania Child Protection Services Law (which includes obtaining applicable background certifications and, where applicable, signing a disclosure statement). An Approved Adult can be a volunteer or an employee of the congregation. By virtue of their contact with children and youth, all Approved Adults are Mandated Reporters of suspected child abuse under Pennsylvania’s CPSL.

Approved Adults include, but are not limited to:

- Sunday school teachers
- Vacation Bible school teachers
- Children’s leaders
- Mentors
- Children’s choir directors and musicians
- Youth ministers
- Rostered leaders: Pastors, Associates in Ministry, Deacons and Deaconesses
- Other adults who have satisfied all the requirements of Approved Adults, such as nursery volunteers

Mandated Reporter (MR) is a person who is required to report to state authorities when he or she has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse in accordance with the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law, 23. Pa.C.S.A. §6301 et. seq

C. Process to Becoming an Approved Adult

This congregation requires that adults responsible for the care, supervision, guidance, or control of children during routine interaction with children and seeking to obtain Approved Adult status complete the following application process in order to become an Approved Adult.

1. Complete the Approved Adult Application packet (see Appendix A).
2. Obtain copies of valid background certifications (valid certifications are those dated within 60 months) as required by the CPSL. 23 Pa.C.S.A. §6344.4 and present completed form to the office manager (Appendix B).
 - a. Church employees and rostered ministers who seek to become Approved Adults must obtain the following three certifications:
 - i. Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check
 - ii. Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Certification
 - iii. Federal Bureau of Investigation Fingerprint Criminal History Background Check. 23 Pa.C.S.A. §6344.
 - b. Volunteer Approved Adults
 - i. Volunteer Approved Adults who have lived in Pennsylvania continuously for the last 10 years:
 1. Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check
 2. Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Certification
 3. Disclosure Statement for VolunteersAdditionally, these Approved Adults must sign the Volunteer Disclosure 23 Pa.C.S.A. §6344.2
 - ii. Volunteer Approved Adults who have not lived in Pennsylvania continuously for the last 10 years need the following:
 1. Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check
 2. Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Certification
 3. Federal Bureau of Investigation Fingerprint Criminal History Background Check. 23 Pa.C.S.A. §6344.2
 - c. Valid background certifications obtained for other employment or volunteer situations may be presented, providing that copies are presented for review and filing, and current employment or volunteering has been verified.
3. Successfully complete an authorized training session and/or complete education for Mandated Reporters (see Appendix D).
4. Sign a Child Protection Covenant and Volunteer Policy (Appendix A) acknowledging that the applicant has read and understood the Child Protection Policy and agrees to comply with it.
5. Applications, certifications, and related papers will be locked in a confidential file under the jurisdiction of the LP or Office Manager.

D. Minor Employees

Under CPSL minor employees (under age 18) who are persons responsible for a child's welfare or a person with direct contact with children through a program, activity, or service must obtain

1. Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check
2. Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Certification

but are exempt by CPSL from needing the FBI certification, provided that the minor and his/her parents swear and affirm in writing that the minor has not been convicted of a disqualifying crime (listed in the Volunteer Disclosure, Appendix C) in a location outside of Pennsylvania or placed on another state's child abuse registry.

E. Mandated Reporter

1. Under Pennsylvania CPSL, a Mandated Reporter is a person who is required to report to state authorities when he or she has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse. Reasonable suspicion, and not actual proof, is sufficient to make a report. The initiative for investigating abuse resides with the Department of Human Services and should not be carried out by the reporter.
2. CPSL designates categories of people as Mandated Reporters, including, but not limited to:
 - a. A clergy person, priest, rabbi, minister, Christian Science practitioner, religious healer, or spiritual leader of any regularly established church or other religious organization
 - b. An individual paid or unpaid, who, on the basis of the individual's role as an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity, or service, is a person responsible for the child's welfare or has direct contact with children.
 - i. A "person responsible for the child's welfare" is a person who provides permanent or temporary care, supervision, mental health diagnosis or treatment, training, or control of a child in lieu of parental care, supervision, and control.
 - ii. "Direct volunteer contact" is the care, supervision, guidance, or control of children and routine interaction with children.
 - iii. "Routine interaction" is regular and repeated contact that is integral to a person's employment or volunteer responsibilities.
 - c. A school employee
 - d. An employee of a child-care service who has direct contact with children in the course of employment
 - e. An individual supervised or managed by a person listed above, who has direct contact with children in the course of employment
 - f. An attorney affiliated with an agency, institution, organization, or other entity, including a school or regularly established religious organization that is responsible for the care, supervision, guidance, or control of children
 - g. An emergency medical services provider certified by the Department of Health
 - h. A peace officer or law enforcement official
 - i. A licensed health care worker

3. A Mandated Reporter must make a report of suspected child abuse if he or she has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse under any of the following circumstances:
 - a. The Mandated Reporter comes into contact with the child in the course of employment, occupation, and practice of a profession or through a regularly scheduled program, activity, or service.
 - b. The Mandated Reporter is directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance, or training of the child, or is affiliated with an agency, institution, organization, school, regularly established church or religious organization, or other entity that is directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance, or training of the child.
 - c. A person makes a specific disclosure to the Mandated Reporter that an identifiable child is the victim of child abuse. Nothing requires the Mandated Reporter to have direct contact with the child in order to make a report.
 - d. An individual 14 years of age or older makes a specific disclosure to the Mandated Reporter that the individual has committed child abuse.
4. A Mandated Reporter makes a report of suspected child abuse in accordance with the procedure outlined in section H. Reporting Suspected Child Abuse. 23 Pa.C.S.A. §6311

F. Forms & Descriptions

All forms necessary for becoming an Approved Adult in a paid or non-paid capacity, as well as permission slips for events not held at the church and incident reports are located in the Appendixes.

G. Appropriate Behavioral Guidelines

To ensure that a nurturing Christian environment for children and youth is maintained within the congregation, to protect children and youth who participate in activities sponsored by the church from sexual and/or physical abuse, and to protect the congregation's members from false allegations of abuse, the congregation has adopted the following policy:

1. **Child Abuse Prohibited:** Those who accept the special responsibility of working with the congregation's children and youth shall not violate that responsibility by engaging in child abuse, defined in Section B, above.
2. **Sexual Abuse Prohibited:** Those who accept the special responsibility of working with the congregation's children shall not violate that responsibility by engaging in sexual abuse, defined in Section B, above.
3. **Two Approved Adult Rule:** Two Approved Adults should be present during any children's activity sponsored by or occurring within the congregation. Where possible, doors should be left open or a window should allow easy observation of the room. Non-Approved Adults may be present during any such children's activity but must be supervised by an Approved Adult.

4. **Empty Room Policy:** After an activity, check rooms to ensure that all participants have vacated the room and that the door is locked. This will help to minimize situations where abuse might occur.
5. **Expressions of Affection:** True expressions of affection toward children can be a manifestation of Christ's love for all of us. A kind word of encouragement to a child or a pat on the back can be a small but significant act for both the adult and the child. That being said, adults must use caution and common sense when physically expressing affection toward children.
 - Respect a child's refusal of affection.
 - Never make a child feel uncomfortable.
 - Be aware of appropriate hand placement. A child or an observer could misinterpret a pat on the bottom or a bear hug.
 - Note that a body-to-body embrace, a touch on private areas (those areas covered by a bathing suit), or any type of kiss is inappropriate.
6. **Permission Slips:** Children and youth must have permission to participate in any overnight activity or any activity that takes place away from church grounds. That permission must be in writing and signed by a parent or legal guardian. It must identify the activity in which the child or youth will be participating. The Permission slips will list Approved Adults who will serve as supervisors. (See Appendix L)

The Lead Pastor and/or person(s) designated by the LP may waive the requirement for permission slips where a permission slip serves no useful purpose (for example when a child is accompanied to the activity by his or her parent or guardian).
7. **Overnight Rule:** Overnight activities involving children shall be supervised by at least two Approved Adults. If the event involves children of both genders, then there should be at least one Approved Adult of each gender.
8. **Transportation of Children:** When children and youth are transported for church activities:
 - a. It is strongly recommended that ALL employees/volunteers who drive their personal vehicles for insured activities have minimum liability limits of \$100,000/\$300,000
 - b. When personal vehicles are used, the driver of the vehicle must be 18 years of age or older.
 - c. Children and youth shall be transported in groups with at least one Approved Adult in each vehicle.
 - d. When only one child is being transported by a non-parental or non-guardian adult, there shall be two adults present, one of which must be an Approved Adult. However, parents or guardians may in writing designate on the permission form an adult they trust to transport their child without a second adult present.

- e. For rented or church owned vehicles, drivers must be 25 – 70 years old. Youth Pastors can be 21-70 years old, with NO moving violations in the past three years. Drivers must have NO major moving violation and NO MORE THAN ONE minor moving violation for the prior three years. Drivers must verify and sign their Driver Information form (Appendix A).
- f. Drivers must fill out and sign the Driver Log prior to the transportation of any children and youth in church owned or rented vehicles (Appendix M).

9. Safe Ministry Communications: Texting, e-mailing, and other forms of electronic communication have become common today among children, youth, and adults. Texting and electronic communication can be a vital part of ministry work, but their improper use can produce serious consequences. In order to promote safety and to create a healthy environment for texting and electronic communication between staff, volunteers, and especially among our children and youth, the following guidelines must be our safe ministry practice:

- a. Youth Ministers and Approved Adults may not transmit any content that is illicit, unsavory, abusive, pornographic, discriminatory, harassing, or disrespectful when communicating with each other or with minors involved in ministry activities.
- b. Youth Ministers and Approved Adults are encouraged to talk to the youth about the potential harm to themselves and others in transmitting content that is illicit, unsavory, abusive, pornographic, discriminatory, harassing, or disrespectful.
- c. Except in an emergency, Youth Ministers and Approved Adults should not transmit any personal information pertaining to a child, such as name, phone number, e-mail address, or photographs, without the consent of the youth ministry participant and his or her parent or guardian, This applies to group texting, group e-mail, website posting, blogging, Twitter feed or any other public method of electronic communication.
- d. Youth Ministers and Approved Adults will discourage students from using cell phones during ministry programs except in an emergency, to contact a parent or guardian, or to place calls specifically approved by a leader.
- e. Youth Ministers and Approved Adults who have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse through electronic media must immediately follow the reporting procedures outlined in Section H.
- f. All information, images, or videos shared electronically through public ministry communications channels are not considered confidential.
- g. Cellular phones can cause distraction if used while driving. For safety reasons, those involved in transporting youth are not to make or receive calls or text messages while driving. Passengers are permitted to use their cell phones.

- h. Youth Ministers and Approved Adults are encouraged to talk to the youth to help them understand the potential harm to themselves and others when using cell phones while driving, especially for texting.

H. Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

1. Reasonable suspicion

Reasonable suspicion that a child has been the victim of abuse, and not actual proof, is sufficient to make a report. The initiative for investigating abuse resides with the Department of Human Services and should not be carried out by the reporter.

2. Permissive reporting

- a. Anyone – not only a Mandated Reporter -- who witnesses or has reasonable suspicion that a child has been abused by anyone (including the child’s family, guardians, an Approved Adult, or any volunteer) may report it to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services ChildLine and Abuse Registry (800-932-0313), or online at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis.
- b. The reporter should then notify the Lead Pastor (or the Personnel Committee if any of the church staff is the suspected abuser.)

3. Mandated reporting

- a. A Mandated Reporter who witnesses or has reasonable suspicion that a child has been abused by anyone (including the child’s family, guardians, an Approved Adult, or volunteer) must by law make an immediate and direct report in the following manner:
 - i. Electronically at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis, a confirmation of which will be received from the PA Department of Human Services.
 - ii. must be followed up within 48 hours by a written report, which may be submitted electronically (www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis), within 48 hours. Paper written reports use PA State Form CY-47 (a copy of which in Appendix E).
- b. After making a report to ChildLine, a Mandated Reporter is required to immediately thereafter notify the Lead Pastor and the Personnel Committee Chair.
- c. After completing both a. and b. above, the Mandated Reporter must provide a copy of the confirmation received from electronic submission to the Department of Human Services to the Lead Pastor and the Personnel Committee Chair.
- d. Under CPSL, if a Mandated Reporter willfully fails to report child abuse, the penalties range from a misdemeanor of the second degree to a felony of the second degree.
- e. Under CPSL a Mandated Reporter is immune from civil and criminal liability as long as the report was made in good faith.
- f. Under CPSL, a Mandated Reporter’s identity is kept confidential with the exception of being released to law enforcement officials or the district attorney’s office.

4. The Lead Pastor

As a Mandated Reporter, the LP is required by law to report suspected child abuse but with further considerations and duties as follows:

- a. Confidentiality:** According to Pennsylvania Law 42 Pa.C.S.A. §5943 (relating to confidential communications to clergymen), “No clergyman, ..., who while in the course of his duties has acquired information from any person secretly and in confidence shall be compelled, or allowed without consent of such person, to disclose that information in any legal proceeding, trial, or investigation before any government unit.” Thus, if the suspected abuser confidentially reports their activity to the pastor in the course of the pastor-congregant relationship (seeking pastoral support, guidance, absolution, counseling, etc.) the information remains confidential. However, if the pastor learns of the suspected abuse from other sources, the information must be reported.
- b. Report from Individual who is not required by law to make a report.** After receiving a verbal or written communication of suspected child abuse from a person who is not required by law to make a report, the LP must proceed as follows:
 - i. Strongly encourage the person to contact ChildLine by calling 800-932-0313, especially if names are not provided.
 - ii. Ask the reporter to provide the names of both the suspected abuser and the child and to give his or her consent for the LP to make a report.
 - iii. If both names and consent are given, the LP must make a report.
 - iv. If consent is not given to the LP to make a report, the LP must keep confidentiality with the reporter unless the reporter provides information that makes the subject of the report an identifiable individual. In such case, a mandatory report must be filed.
 - v. Notify the Office of the Synod Bishop immediately.
- c. Report from Mandated Reporter:** After receiving a verbal or written communication of suspected child abuse from a Mandated Reporter, the Lead Pastor will:
 - i. Ask the Mandated Reporter if he or she has completed a direct report of suspected child abuse. If no report has been made, the LP must remind the Mandated Reporter of the required duties according to the Pennsylvania CPSL and the congregation CPP.
 - ii. Notify the Office of the Synod Bishop immediately concerning any report of suspected child abuse and the date the report was forwarded to the ChildLine.
 - iii. Must notify the Chairperson of the Personnel Committee and Congregation Council President that a report of suspected child abuse was made and his or her progress complying with the CPSL and the CPP of the congregation.

I. Response to Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse

1. The Lead Pastor or the Congregation Council President shall put the congregation's insurance carrier on notice of the filing of a report of suspected child abuse.
2. The LP and Congregation Council President will cooperate with all state officials in the investigation of any reported instance of suspected child abuse.
3. The Lead Pastor or Congregation Council president will notify parents or guardians of all children involved in an alleged incident, unless the parents or guardians are the persons suspected of the abuse. The phone call or visit will be documented. This notification should remain factual and not offer opinions or thoughts about the event or how it occurred. The parent or legal guardian should be advised that any investigation of the claim will be under the auspices of the appropriate state agency.
4. The Lead Pastor or Personnel Committee Chair will prepare for the Congregation Council a confidential written summary of all reports of suspected child abuse, keeping the name of the reporter confidential. The summary should include steps taken in response and should be updated as necessary. This reporting shall occur in an executive session of the council so that confidentiality can be maintained.
5. The Congregation Council will determine whether the congregation should engage legal counsel in consultation with the insurance carrier.
6. The Congregation Council will authorize the Lead Pastor or one of the Council members to act as the official spokesperson for the congregation. Only the authorized person or persons can speak for the congregation to the news media, government agencies, attorneys, or others. If counsel has been appointed, assigned, or retained, any communication concerning the event should first be reviewed with counsel.
7. All other steps taken to respond to an allegation of child abuse will be approved in advance by the Congregation Council and will as far as possible be documented by them.
8. All communications within the congregation regarding the report of suspected child abuse shall attempt to protect the dignity and privacy of those persons affected by the report including the alleged child victim and the person suspected of child abuse while at the same time ensuring that persons in responsibility and law enforcement authorities remain fully informed.
9. The LP shall keep the Synod Bishop's Office apprised of all developments.

J. Personnel Committee Responsibilities

1. With the help of the Youth Minister and Youth Ministry Committee, review and make recommendations to the congregation for revising congregation policy regarding the safety of our children.
2. With the help of the Youth Minister, provide training for all staff and volunteers working with the children regarding child abuse (physical and sexual) and congregation policy. Training should be presented prior to work with children.
3. Delegate to the Youth Minister and/or Lead Pastor the task of collecting and
4. reviewing all Approved Adult applications.
5. Delegate to the Youth Minister to obtain, review, and maintain a file of the background certifications required by CPSL and this policy. Ensure that all are valid within five years, checking periodically.
6. Check in with Christian Education and Youth Ministry Committees periodically to ensure that policies are being followed.
7. Delegate to the Youth Minister to keep a file of all permission slips and sign-in sheets (Appendices L & M), which will be stored in the congregation office. Permission slips will be kept for 20 years, or until the child named on the slip has reached his or her 20th birthday, whichever date first occurs. Permission slips may be scanned into a digital file and kept electronically. If an incident of abuse is reported relating to an event, the permission slips for that event will be maintained indefinitely.
8. Keep Congregation Council apprised of all activities of the Personnel Committee pertaining to CPP.
9. Upon a reasonable belief that an approved adult has been arrested or convicted of an offense that would constitute grounds for denying employment or participation in a program, activity, or service, or reasonable belief that an approved adult has been named as a perpetrator in a founded or indicated report, or if an approved adult has provided notice as required under this the child protective services law, then the Personnel Committee shall immediately require the Approved Adult to submit current information as required under subsection 6344(b).

K. Violations of Child Protection Policy

Persons who admit to, plead guilty to, or are convicted in a court of law of any form of physical or sexual abuse of a child will be immediately, permanently, and completely disqualified by the Congregational Council from working with children in the congregation. Persons who admit to any type of physical or sexual abuse of a child but who have not appeared in a court of law will be disqualified from working with children in the congregation. The Personnel Committee and Congregation Council shall disqualify any person from working with children in the

congregation while allegations of sexual or physical abuse are being investigated. The Personnel Committee can temporarily or permanently disqualify any person(s) from working with children as the committee deems appropriate.

Alleged violations of the policy, other than abuse, shall be immediately reported to the Personnel Committee chair who will report it to the Lead Pastor who shall report to the president of Congregation Council and Personnel Committee Chair. The alleged violations of the policy will be investigated. That investigation shall include a meeting with the person(s) involved. If the person(s) is found to be in violation of the policy, the Lead Pastor, in consultation with the Council President and Personnel Committee Chair will determine what disqualification or disciplinary action, if any, is necessary.