

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
Of Granville, Ohio**

**Child/Youth Safety and Sexual Abuse Prevention Policy**

**Purpose**

The First Presbyterian Church of Granville, Ohio is determined to be a safe place – spiritually, physically, and emotionally – for all people. This policy is designed to ensure the safety of all children and volunteers involved in the education, fellowship, and service programs of the church. ***All employees of First Presbyterian Church will be familiar with and abide by this policy.***

**Definitions**

- “Child” means anyone under the age of eighteen and/or any adult who is developmentally disabled.
- “Child safety” means preventing sexual abuse or other non-accidental injury to a child.
- Volunteer means persons 18 years old and older who work with children and youth who have a valid background check.
- Helpers mean persons who work with children and youth without a valid background check.
- Staff means First Presbyterian Church of Granville staff and interns approved by the personnel committee.
- Non-staff means helpers, volunteers, and independent contractors.

**Volunteer Worker Selection**

1. All persons who volunteer to work with children in any capacity related to the work of The First Presbyterian Church of Granville, Ohio shall have been associated with the church for at least six months unless written recommendations are received from their previous church staff.
2. Each volunteer must complete the attached application form.
3. Each volunteer should have experience working with children, or should demonstrate an ability and willingness to learn.
4. Church membership is required for leadership positions having significant responsibility for making or applying church policies.
5. A criminal background check is required. These may be current checks done for another organization. If done for this volunteer position, receipts may be turned in for reimbursement.

**Safety Rules**

1. All volunteers, helpers, and independent contractors for child care must observe the “two adult” rule at all times. This rule requires that volunteer leaders and independent contractors never be alone with children or youth, including, but not limited to a place that would be out of view of another adult. For purposes of the “two adult” rule, an authorized intern or helper age 18 or older may be considered a second “adult.” In the case of preverbal children (ages 0-3), two related persons may not volunteer together without a third “adult”.

2. Persons serving as non-staff must not be the only adult alone in a vehicle with a child unless (1) permission has been obtained from that child's parent, (2) the person is driving simultaneously with other volunteer drivers as part of a group, or (3) there is an emergency involving a threat to health, safety, or security.
3. Leaders and participants will model positive, appropriate Christian behavior.
4. Leaders and participants will behave respectfully toward others and the property of others.
5. Teens, grades 7-12, may be allowed in the building unsupervised if either of the following applies:
  1. There are 3 or more teens and permission has been given by a volunteer.
  2. If there is one or more teen and permission has been given by staff.
  3. For either situation above, the staff or volunteer must remain in the building and be responsible for teens while teens are on the premises.
6. At all times leaders, to the best of their abilities, will ensure the safety of the participants. Participants will not endanger themselves or others.
7. Leaders and participants are expected to remain at the site of the event for the duration of the event, and to be available to participants who need assistance. No participant may leave the site of the event without the permission of the leader.
8. The general written consent form must be signed for a child/youth to participate in activities on or off-site. Signing this policy is considered permission for both. In absence of this form, a temporary verbal commitment must be given to two adult leaders granting permission for a child to participate.
9. All children, under the age of 12 must be released to an authorized parent/adult or sibling who is 12 or older and of suitable discretion.
10. Parent or guardian must be notified of any activity that takes place off-site.
11. Leaders and volunteers are prohibited from engaging in the following behaviors with respect to children:
  - 1) Physical striking, hitting, or spanking
  - 2) Sexually-oriented touching or other unwelcome touching
  - 3) Verbal or emotional abuse (shouting, sexually charged conversation, demeaning language)
  - 4) Gross neglect of physical or emotional needs

### **Training**

All volunteers (except those serving as drivers only) must complete the orientation and the training appropriate to their position before beginning their assignment. Throughout the volunteer worker's tenure, ongoing supervision and training opportunities will be provided to help the volunteer and participants to have a rewarding experience, and to ensure quality programming.

***Training will be provided and conducted for the entire staff on an annual basis.***

### **Driving**

All volunteers and staff who drive children or youth must be 21 years or older and have a valid driver's license and proof of insurance coverage for the vehicle to be used, copies of which are

to be filed with the Director of Children's Ministry Office each year prior to the commencement of service.

For longer trips (overnight or beyond 100 miles), drivers must be selected from an Approved Driver Pool. To be eligible for inclusion in the Approved Driver Pool, an individual must provide the Director of Children's Ministries the following: (1) a copy of a current driver's license, (2) proof of insurance coverage for the vehicle to be used, and (3) a copy of Bureau of Motor Vehicles driving record not older than one year. Inclusion in the Approved Driver Pool will be at the discretion of the Director of Children's Ministries based upon a review of the driving record and other documentation presented.

All children and youth being transported must have their own seats and operating seat belts. The driver must require that all seat belts are fastened before driving.

Youth participating in our program may not transport other participants on church-sponsored programs. Youth may drive themselves and immediate family members, with parental permission. (written or verbal with two adults as witnesses)

### **Reporting Safety Concerns**

If a volunteer or employee is aware of any safety concern involving children, or suspects that any child has been abused or neglected, he or she shall report such concern immediately to the Director of Children's Ministries or the Pastor or an Associate Pastor.

If any volunteer has knowledge of any incident in which the above Safety Rules have been violated, he or she shall report such incident to one of the professional staff members. The First Presbyterian Church of Granville, Ohio will take all reports very seriously. Allegations of incidents involving violation of the above policy will be handled with respect for all parties involved, and timely notification of all parental, legal, social welfare, insurance, or other authorities will be made. Opportunities for spiritual and emotional support will be offered. All reporting will be handled discreetly and tactfully, and any allegations of misconduct will remain confidential except for required reporting.

### **Responsibility**

Implementation and enforcement of the Child/Youth Safety and Sexual Abuse Prevention Policy shall be the responsibility of Director of Children's Ministries.

### **Policy Monitoring and Review**

A representative ad hoc group will review this policy annually, and will report on said review to Session. All volunteers and staff are encouraged to make suggestions as to how to make this policy more effective in protecting children and supporting volunteers. Suggestions should be reported to the Pastor/Head of Staff or Program Leader.

**I have read the above Policy and agree to abide by its provisions.**

---

(Signature)

---

(Date)

---

(Print name)