

Child Protection Policy

East Fairview Church of the Brethren

September 2014

Scope: The Child Protection Policy of the East Fairview Church of the Brethren will apply to all church employees and those members of our church who volunteer or are appointed to work with children in any capacity.

This policy will include all types of child abuse including verbal, physical, emotional and sexual.

Screening:

- A.** For all paid staff, Christian Education directors, VBS directors, directors of any present and future children's programs, and overnight chaperones, a screening process will be necessary, which includes:
 - a.** State Police Criminal Background Check
 - b.** Child Abuse Clearance
 - c.** Children's Ministry Covenant
 - d.** Training for all teachers
- B.** For **all** child workers (e.g. Christian Education, Vacation Bible School, J.U.I.C.E. Night, Nursery, etc.) a screening process will be necessary, which includes:
 - a.** Approval by the program leader (Youth Director, Christian Education Director, etc.)
 - b.** Children's Ministry Covenant
 - c.** Training
- C.** For consideration to volunteer with children and youth programs, a person must first consistently attend East Fairview for a minimum of six (6) months. ("Consistently" is defined as a minimum of two (2) Sundays per month).
- D.** If a child worker has completed both clearance forms within the past year, they may submit those. All clearances will be paid for by the church.
- E.** Criminal background checks, child abuse clearances, and children's ministry covenants will be placed on file in the church office. They will **ONLY** be reviewed by the Family Ministries Coordinator and the church secretary.
- F.** If a child abuse clearance returns with any previous record, the applicant will be denied the ability to work in any capacity with children. If a criminal background check is returned with a record, the Pastor, the Youth Director, the Discipleship Team Chair and/or the Family Ministries Coordinator will discuss the application with the applicant.
- G.** The original clearances must be seen by the Pastor, Discipleship Team Chair or Family Ministries Coordinator. A copy of the form will be kept on file.

Supervision:

- A.** All members of the church will be made aware of this policy. Those people working directly with children and youth will receive more extensive training.
- B.** Two approved adults should be present during any church-sponsored program or event involving children and youth.

- C. When practical, the door of a room should always remain open so observers can see inside the room when passing. This is essential for rooms with no windows in the door.
- D. Parents should be notified well in advance of **all** events in which their children will be participating. If an adult has a legitimate reason to be alone with a child (counseling, etc.) parents should be notified in advance.
- E. All adult overnight chaperones will need to have cleared the above screening process in step A. Parental permission must be obtained prior to the overnight activity.
- F. Any suspected inappropriate activity between a child worker and a child must be reported immediately to the director of the program. If confirmed, the worker will no longer be able to work with the children or youth. If the inappropriate activity is a sexual abuse incident, the director of the program and the Pastor will be notified immediately.

Reporting:

- A. All members of the church, especially those working directly with the youth, have an obligation to report any case of suspected child abuse to the Pastor and director of the program.
- B. A report may be shared verbally, but preferably in writing using the child abuse report form, with the director of the program and the Pastor. This should be done immediately. The suspected child abuse will be discussed with no one else.
- C. Appropriate investigation and action will be taken according to the “Congregational Ethics and Ethics in Ministry Relations – 1996” (as amended) guidelines.

Records:

- A. The records of all child and youth workers will remain on file in the church office. The file will be marked CONFIDENTIAL and viewed only by those listed in screening, step D.
- B. All clearances and covenants will remain on file for at least ten (10) years after the workers have ended their service.

Education & Training:

- A. All members of the church will have the opportunity to hear about the Child Protection Policy, who it involves, and what it entails. Copies of the policy itself will be made available. The policy will be printed in the church directory and posted on the church website.
- B. All paid staff of the East Fairview Church of the Brethren and those people working with children in any capacity must participate in separate training. This will include a detailed description of the guidelines and supervision process, the signs of suspected child abuse, and reporting procedures. It will be offered at least once annually.