



Child Care Guidelines

It is our desire to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all persons at St. John's UCC Laurys Station. Toward that end, we have developed the following guidelines specific to Children under the care of our Staff and Child Care Volunteers. Children accompanying their parents to church functions at which Child care arrangements are not provided are the responsibility and under the care of their parents.

Volunteer Eligibility Requirements

At least thirty (30) days prior to participating as a Volunteer in activities involving Children, all Volunteers shall:

- be members of the church or well-known within the church community for no less than six (6) months;
- have submitted a completed Volunteer Disclosure Form (substantially in the form attached hereto) to the church office; and
- have submitted a signed copy of these Child Care Guidelines to the church office.

In addition, at least thirty (30) days prior to participating as a Volunteer in activities involving Children, all Adult Volunteers shall have provided to the church office:

- a current (within 1 year) PA Child Abuse History Clearance Form;
- a PA State Police Criminal Record check; and
- FBI clearances (if Volunteer is new to the state of PA)

The information on the forms will be reviewed by the Pastor to determine clearance status. If necessary, the Pastor may consult with other church Leaders to determine the eligibility of the Volunteer. The Pastor shall notify the Leader and the applicant, in writing, when the eligibility requirements have been met. All supporting documentation shall be kept in a secure file in the church office. These files, and the contents thereof, are accessible to the Pastor and church secretary only. Except as provided herein, The Pastor and the church secretary are prohibited from disclosing any information contained in these files unless required by law.



Leadership Responsibilities:

The Program or Event Leader(s) shall:

- ensure that all teachers and/or Volunteers know these Guidelines and implement them
- maintain registration information for all Children. Information on the registration of Children will include but not be limited to:
 - Adult to be contacted in the event of emergency and any telephone numbers needed to do so
 - food allergies
 - to whom the Child may be released
- monitor Adult to Child ratios to comply with the following standard set by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare for Child care facilities.
 - Infants (birth to 12 months): maximum 4 Children to 1 Adult
 - Young toddlers (13 months to 24 months): maximum 5 Children to 1 Adult
 - Older toddlers (25 months to 36 months): maximum 6 Children to 1 Adult
 - Preschoolers (37 months to entry into 1st grade): maximum 10 Children to 1 Adult
 - Young school age (1st grade to 3rd grade): maximum 12 Children to 1 Adult
 - Older school age (4th grade to 18 years): maximum 15 Children to 1 Adult



Staff and Volunteer Responsibilities:

1. At no time shall a Child be left unsupervised while engaged in a church sponsored activity. Whenever possible, Children shall not be alone with only one Adult. Two non-related Adults provide the best protection for the Children and the Volunteers. When this is not possible, doors should be kept open.
2. Teachers and Volunteers shall be responsible for releasing Children only to their parent/guardian or a responsible Adult designated by the parent/guardian.
3. Off-Site Activities require the completion and submission of the appropriate parent/guardian permission form prior to the commencement of the activity. Prior to departure, the activity Leader must ensure all drivers have in their possession their current driver's licenses, vehicle registrations, and insurance cards. Off-site activities must originate and end at the church or, if the Children are to be taken directly home, two non-related Adults must be present in the car while transporting Children directly home.
4. First Aid Kits are available in the nursery, sacristy, and kitchen for use in treating minor injuries. Any serious injuries must be reported to the Pastor, the Leader(s) and the Safety Committee for review.
5. In the event of a building evacuation, teachers and/or Volunteers shall be responsible for all Children within their care. Upon evacuation, groups should assemble at the far end of either parking lot. Attendance rosters are to be taken along to verify that everybody has left the building.



In the event of suspected abuse:

Sexual exploitation and sexual harassment of any kind are strictly prohibited at St. John's UCC. While not all Volunteers are mandated by law to report suspected abuse, we are all charged with a moral obligation to protect our Children. Therefore, any suspected abuse, even if it might have occurred while the Child was not in our care, needs to be reported to ChildLine, the local Lehigh County Child Abuse Service. The Pastor, Leader(s) and Safety Committee Chair can assist with any reports.

If you are aware of a suspected incident of abuse of a Child occurring while the Child is under the care of the church:

1. ensure the safety of the Child;
2. report the incident to ChildLine (1-800-932-0313);
3. notify the Pastor or the President of Church Council;
4. document, in writing, anything the Child said regarding the incident (The Pastor, as a Mandatory Reporter can photograph the victim to document evidence.); and
5. fill out the ChildLine report form within 48 hours.

If there are allegations involving a Volunteer, that Volunteer shall be suspended from contact with Children pending the result of ChildLine's investigation.

Any media inquiries shall be handled by the Pastor or the President of Church Council. They shall make it known that we are fully cooperating with any investigation and are doing all that can possibly be done to protect our Children.

If you are aware of a suspected incident of abuse of a Child occurring outside the care of the church:

1. report the incident to ChildLine;
2. notify the Pastor or the President of Church Council;
3. document in writing anything the Child said regarding the incident (The Pastor, as a Mandatory Reporter can photograph the victim to document evidence.); and
4. fill out the ChildLine report form within 48 hours.

Definitions:

Staff – Includes the Pastor, Secretary, Director of Music and Sexton

Child/Children – Person(s) younger than 18 years

Adult – Person 18 years or older

Child Care Volunteer (Volunteer) – Any person engaged by the church to carry out its ministry to children. Child Care Volunteers include elected or appointed Leaders of the church including, but not limited to, Christian Education Teachers and Helpers, and Nursery Monitors.

Program or Event Leader (Leader) – Any Child Care Volunteers who serve in a leadership capacity including, but not limited to: Staff, Christian Education Chair(s), Youth Group Leaders, and Youth and Children's Choir Directors.

Sexual Exploitation – Sexual activity or contact (not limited to sexual intercourse) in which a member of the Staff or a Child Care Volunteer engaged in the work of the church takes advantage of the vulnerability of a participant by causing or allowing the participant to engage in sexual behavior with the Staff member or Child Care Volunteer.

Sexual Harassment – Repeated or coercive sexual advances toward another person contrary to his or her wishes. It includes behavior directed at another person's sexuality or sexual orientation with the intent of intimidating, humiliating, or embarrassing the other person, or subjecting the person to public discrimination.

I have read and agree to comply with the Child Care Guidelines printed above.

Name of Volunteer (print)

Signature of Volunteer

Date