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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these....”

Mark 10:14b

No matter what your age, or race, or color,
We are the human family together,
For the Creator made us all.
Since life is his gift,
We foster the well-being of others,
Protecting the unborn and helpless from harm.

Contemporary Testimony #12

Moline Christian Reformed Church will seek to honor God and each other by doing the following:

- Seeking to establish a healthy concept of protection for children and for volunteers/staff
- Equipping the congregation to care for, protect, and foster the well-being of children
- Establishing a zero tolerance policy regarding physical and sexual abuse in the church
- Reporting cases of suspected abuse
- Responding pastorally

BOARD OF TRUSTEES RECOMMENDS FIVE PRINCIPLES

Recommend that congregations develop an abuse prevention policy that includes the following principles:

--Sexual and physical abuse against a parishioner by a volunteer or church leader will not be tolerated.

--Churches will reduce the risk of sexual and physical abuse in a church building, in a church-sponsored program, or by volunteers and church leaders by implementing abuse prevention policies.

--Allegations by a minor of sexual or physical abuse by a volunteer or church leader, in a church facility, or in a church-sponsored program, will be reported to local police officials or child protection authorities.

--A volunteer or church leader who confesses or is found guilty of sexual or physical abuse against a minor or adult parishioner will be removed or dismissed from position or office.

--A volunteer or church leader removed or dismissed from position or office should not be considered for re-entry or reinstatement without the advice of legal counsel.

Approved by the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church, February 2003; reviewed by legal counsel for the CRCNA, April 2003.

DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

1. **Physical abuse.** Any non-accidental human act that results in physical pain or injury to a child - whether or not it leaves a cut or wound, or a mark or a bruise. Physically abusive behavior ranges from slapping, pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, and biting to more severe forms like choking, severe spanking, beating, hitting with an object, burning, stabbing, and shooting. In other words, physical abuse is an intentional means of inflicting pain or injury to another person. It is sometimes a single event, but can also be a chronic pattern of behavior.
2. **Physical neglect.** Not doing what one is supposed to be doing to meet the physical needs of someone in his or her care. Neglect interferes with or prevents a child's normal development.
3. **Sexual abuse.** The exploitation of a child or any sexual intimacy forced on a child for the sexual stimulation or gratification of another person. Child sexual abuse can refer to taking advantage of a child who is not capable of understanding sexual acts or resisting coercion such as threats or offers of gifts. Sexual abuse may or may not involve physical contact. Examples of non-physical sexual abuse include people exposing themselves, displaying pornographic material, photographing a child for pornographic materials, obscene telephone calls, voyeurism, and request to engage in sexual activity (where no physical contact occurs). Examples of sexual abuse involving physical contact including fondling the body parts such as breasts, crotch, buttocks, or sexual organs; intercourse; oral or anal sex.
4. **Emotional abuse.** Attempting to control a child's life through words, threats, and fear; destroying a child's self-worth through harassment, threats, and deprivation. Emotional abuse weakens a child's mental and physical ability to resist, cuts off his or her contacts with others, and causes a gradual loss of self-esteem - all of which reinforce a sense of helplessness and dependence on the abuser.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

1. Corporal punishment (slapping, hitting, pushing) is not permitted.
2. Abusive verbal discipline (yelling, hurling insults, threatening) is not permitted.
3. Parent(s) are to be informed and involved whenever a child/youth misbehaves beyond minor correction or if a pattern of misbehavior increases.
4. Volunteers/staff ordinarily should not physically restrain a child in their care. Leaders should ask for assistance if a child behaves in a manner that seems to require restraint. If the leader determines that restraint is needed, the child's parent will be notified immediately.
5. Concerns about a child's behavior or the appropriate response to a child's behavior should be reported to the program supervisor.
6. An aide or a parent should be involved weekly in classrooms where misbehavior is an ongoing problem.
7. Expectations of children's/youths' behavior must reflect their age and level of comprehension. Similarly, discipline must reflect their age and level of comprehension.
8. Children are to be reminded of the kind of behavior that is acceptable for the setting. Older children and youth may benefit from having these expectations & consequences in written form.
9. Appropriate forms of discipline are to be reviewed with volunteers/staff before church-sponsored programs begin a new season. Then periodic reminders are to be given as needed.
10. Whenever possible, leaders should try to avoid having to discipline a child/youth by choosing one or more of the following options:
 - Distract the child/youth with another activity.
 - Help the child/youth focus on another more acceptable behavior.
 - Isolate the child/youth from others if another volunteer/staff is available to assist.
11. For young children, time-outs should not last longer (in minutes) than the age of the child.
12. When nothing seems to be working, leaders should get help before "losing their cool."
13. If a student is uncooperative and needs to be removed or sent home, a phone call will be made to the parents that their son/daughter needs to leave the church sponsored event. Transportation from the event is the sole responsibility of the parent.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

This policy applies to adults while serving in ministry to youth who may transport non-related youth during church-sponsored programs.

1. At least two of the following procedures must be in place:
 - A. Two adults are present and seated in the front seat of the vehicle when transporting youth.
 - B. At least two youth are present in the vehicle.
 - C. Youth are seated in the back seats of the vehicle.
 - D. Drivers log-in each pick up and drop off; logs are turned into program supervisor.
 - E. The parent is informed that the child is being transported.
2. Adults must have a valid driver's license and proof of insurance before transporting youth. Drivers who routinely transport youth will have their driving record reviewed prior to the beginning of each church year.
3. Drivers need to abide by state requirements for car seat use, seatbelt use, and air bag safety.
 - A. Youth are to wear seat belts whenever the vehicle is in service. Drivers may not transport more youths than available seatbelts.
 - B. Where required by law, car seats must be available for younger children.
 - C. For safety, youth under the age of ten may not sit in the front seat if there is a passenger-side airbag.

Youth may not transport other youths during church sponsored events.

The transportation policy does not extend to parents or guardians who request or give permission for a minor with a valid driver's license to transport non-related youth.

SCREENING POLICY

1. All volunteer and paid staff serving in ministry to youth will submit to screening.
2. Additional screening may be necessary when a volunteer/paid staff changes position requiring additional steps.
3. All volunteer and paid staff must submit application material when requested and may not serve in ministry to youth until approved by the council.
4. Any applicant for a volunteer position may withdraw without prejudice from the application process.
5. The church reserves the right to deny an applicant a volunteer position for any reason.
6. Any applicant with a previous history of sexual misconduct or physical assault, or misdemeanor or felony conviction of child abuse, or pleading of no contest to any misdemeanor or felony charge will not be allowed to serve in ministry to youth.
7. Screening may include a records check with law enforcement agencies.

MINORS AS VOLUNTEERS POLICY

Minors who volunteer for church-run programs are a valuable asset to the church. The following guidelines are to be followed for the safety and well-being of the volunteer as well as the children under their care.

1. Minors may volunteer for service, provided that an adult is present. Minors may not care for children without adult supervision.
2. Only adult volunteers may assist children with bathroom needs.
3. Classes and activities involving minors as volunteers must be conducted only under the supervision of an adult.
4. Minor volunteers should not meet alone with children unless an adult is nearby to observe.
5. All minor volunteers must be approved by the Elder body.
6. All minor volunteers must be four years older than the oldest child under their care.
7. All those under 18 years of age are considered minors.

NURSERY PROGRAMS

Adult volunteers must be at least 18 years old

1. Minors, who are in 4th grade or older, may volunteer for service in the toddler nursery provided that an adult is present. Minor volunteers must be high school age or older for infant nursery. Minors may not care for child(ren) without adult supervision.
2. One adult attendant can care for no more than two infants in the infant nursery before an additional attendant is required. One adult attendant must be in the toddler nursery for every four children before an additional attendant is required. At least two attendants should serve in nursery whenever it is scheduled.
3. Attendants may not take children from the nursery for any reason. Attendant will call parent to the nursery in case of illness. Any significant medical problem should be reported immediately to the child's parent(s). For children who do not require assistance in the bathroom, the adult attendant must remain outside the bathroom. For children who require assistance, the adult female attendant must assist the child with the bathroom door ajar. The diapering of an infant or toddler should take place in the nursery bathroom with infant side door open.
4. Only one member of a family should serve in the nursery at a given time. Unrelated workers will serve in the nursery at the same time.
5. An adult or minor who is not scheduled as a nursery attendant for that particular service may not spend time in the nursery room(s) during or after the service.
6. The Discipline Policy applies to nursery programs.

CHILDREN IN WORSHIP, SUNDAY SCHOOL LITTLE LAMBS AND STORY HOUR

Adult volunteers must be at least 18 years old

1. Only one member of a family should serve in Little Lambs, Children's Worship or in the same classroom in Sunday school.
2. Whenever Children's Worship or Little Lambs is in session, two volunteers, including at least one adult, should be present.
3. Only adults may assist children with bathroom needs. For children who do not require assistance in the bathroom, the adult attendant must remain outside the bathroom. For children who require assistance, the adult female attendant must assist the child with the bathroom door ajar. Children will be encouraged to use bathroom facilities before and after class.
4. Children should not leave the worship center or classroom except for illness, to use the bathroom, or other compelling reasons.
5. When two or more people are meeting in a room the door must be unlocked or open and allow for an unobstructed view into the room.
6. The Sunday school Superintendent or designate will be available to monitor the Sunday school program while it is in session.
7. The Discipline Policy applies to Children's Worship and Sunday school programs.
8. Transportation Policy applies to Children's Worship and Sunday school programs.

CADETS AND GEMS

Adult volunteers must be at least 18 years old

1. Only one member of a family should serve in the same classroom in Cadets and GEMS.
2. Club leaders should identify abusive behavior among minors in their program and be committed to foster Christian behaviors.
3. Counselors should provide adequate supervision of the club members. Each club function should be supervised by at least two persons, an adult leader and another volunteer at least four years older than the oldest club member.
4. Counselor and minor may meet privately *only* with the permission of a parent. Any such meeting should occur in a public place.
5. If a child needs significant medical attention, the parent(s) should be notified immediately.
6. Club members should not arrive more than ten minutes before the start of the class, nor should they stay longer than ten minutes after the class.
7. Churches that plan club activities away from the church facility, out of town, or overnight should conduct them in general compliance with the aforementioned policies.
8. While the appropriate display of affection between club counselors and their club members is often part of conveying support and encouragement to one another, such displays can be misinterpreted. For that reason, displays of affection should be limited to such actions as a brief hug, an arm around the shoulder, an open-hand pat on the back, a handclasp, or a light touch to the forearm. A counselor's or club member's right to refuse any of these will be respected.
9. The Discipline Policy applies to club programs.
10. Transportation Policy applies to club programs.
11. When two or more people are meeting in a room the door must be unlocked or open and allow for an unobstructed view into the room.

YOUTH GROUP

Adult volunteers must be at least 18 years old

1. Each year youth group leaders should provide education and prevention training about abuse for members of the youth group. Topics might include date violence, biblical guidelines for dating relationships, awareness of the signs of abuse, a teenager's response to a teenage victim or abuser, or prevention of abuse.
2. Youth group leaders may meet privately with a youth group member only with the permission of a parent. Any such meeting should occur in a public place.
3. Youth leaders should at no time date a minor or a member of the youth group.
4. No gifts, phone calls, or letters of inappropriate nature should be directed to a youth group member by a youth group leader.
5. In the context of group activities, youth group leaders should provide supervision of the youth in their care. Youth group leaders should not hold a youth group function without appropriate or sufficient supervision. Youth group functions should not be under the supervision of only one youth group leader. These guidelines also apply to activities away from the church site.
6. While the appropriate display of affection is often part of conveying support and encouragement to one another, such displays can be misinterpreted. Therefore, displays of affection between youth leader and youth group member ought to be limited to such actions as a brief hug, an arm around the shoulders, an open-hand pat on the back, a handclasp or handshake, or a light touch to the forearm. Restrict these displays to a public area. A youth group leader's or member's right to refuse such a display of affection will be respected.
7. Discipline Policy applies to youth group programs.
8. Transportation Policy applies to youth group programs.
9. When two or more people are meeting in a room the door must be unlocked or open and allow for an unobstructed view into the room.

PRAISE TEAM

Adult volunteers must be at least 18 years old

1. Praise Team leaders should identify abusive behavior among minors in their program and be committed to foster Christian behaviors.
2. Leader should provide adequate supervision of the praise team members. Each praise team club function should be supervised by at least two persons, an adult leader and another volunteer at least four years older than the oldest club member.
3. Praise team leader and minor may meet privately only with the permission of a parent. Any such meeting should occur in a public place.
4. If a child needs significant medical attention, the parent(s) should be notified immediately.
5. Praise Team members should not arrive more than ten minutes before the start of the class, nor should they stay longer than ten minutes after the class.
6. While the appropriate display of affection between praise team leader and praise team members is often part of conveying support and encouragement to one another, such displays can be misinterpreted. For that reason, displays of affection should be limited to such actions as a brief hug, an arm around the shoulder, an open-hand pat on the back, a handclasp, or a light touch to the forearm. A right to refuse any of these will be respected.
7. The Discipline Policy applies to Praise team programs.
8. Transportation Policy applies to Praise team programs.
9. When two or more people are meeting in a room the door must be unlocked or open and allow for an unobstructed view into the room.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Adult volunteers must be at least 18 years old

1. All VBS classes and activities should be conducted with at least two volunteers/staff at least one of whom is an adult. Volunteers/staff should not meet alone with a child without another adult or leader nearby to observe.
2. Children should not leave their classroom or designated group except for illness, to use the bathroom, or other compelling reasons. For children who do not require assistance in the bathroom, the adult attendant must remain outside the bathroom. For children who require assistance, the adult female attendant must assist the child with the bathroom door ajar.
3. Classrooms held in off-site facilities such as a parsonage, activity building, or school should adhere to the same safety considerations as classrooms in the church building. Children should not meet in a confined space or without adequate supervision.
4. The Discipline Policy applies to VBS programs.
5. When two or more people are meeting in a room the door must be unlocked or open and allow for an unobstructed view into the room.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

1. The volunteer/staff who has reason to believe that a child has been or is likely to be physically harmed, sexually abused, or sexually exploited must report within 24 hours. The reporter has two options: 1.) the better option is to call Child Protective Services (CPS) directly. In most circumstances this will allow the reporter to remain anonymous; 2.) Another option is to report to the program director or the chairman of council who must then call CPS. Whichever option is chosen, the volunteer/staff must fill out the appropriate incident report.
2. It is the responsibility of the CPS or police, to notify the alleged offender of the allegations against him/her. No church member should engage the alleged offender in an investigative process until he/she has been interviewed by CPS or police.
3. After a report has been made to CPS or police, the volunteer/staff should notify the chairman of the council.
4. In the event a volunteer/staff is uncertain as to whether a reasonable suspicion of child abuse has occurred, the volunteer/staff is encouraged to contact CPS.
5. Duties of elders:
 - A. Notify the church's legal counsel and insurance agent when appropriate.
 - B. The chairman of the council or his appointee is the only person who may engage the media in any discussion. Legal counsel must be sought first.
 - C. If deemed necessary, the Elder body may address charges of child abuse against an appointed volunteer or compensated staff only.
 - D. If deemed necessary, the elders may appoint a liaison with CPS or police.

Telephone Numbers for Reporting Abuse

If the victim is a child under the age of eighteen, notify the Children's Protective Services

The first choice of agencies to call is a Child Protective Services.

Allegan County Child Protection Services 269-673-7700

Kent County Child Protection Services 616-247-6300

The next best agency to call is a local police department:

Allegan Co. Sheriff Dept. 269-673-0500

Hopkins City Police Dept. 269-793-1000

Kent Co. Sheriff Dept. 616-632-6100

Wayland City Police Dept. 269-792-9366

Wayland State Police Post 616-877-4645

RESPONDING TO ALLEGED OFFENDERS WHO ARE VOLUNTEERS OR PAID CHURCH LEADERS

1. If at any time, regardless of whether an allegation is made, a volunteer or paid church leader admits sexual misconduct or physical assault against a minor, the admission of guilt should be brought to the attention of the elder body.
2. If a volunteer or paid church leader confesses or is found guilty of sexual misconduct or physical assault against a minor, he/she must be removed from office/position and should be barred from further service in that or a similar capacity.
3. If the Elder body learns from CPS or police officials that allegations of abuse merit serious investigation by the officials or there is the possibility of formal charges:
 - A. The Elder body should request written documentation from agencies specifying the nature of the allegations and the information known at this point.
 - B. The Elder body shall give the accused an opportunity to respond to the allegations.
 - C. The Elder body should enact at least one of the following steps:
 - i. Limit the contact between the accused and accuser or any minor in the congregation.
 - ii. Remove/suspend the accused from office/position (with pay when applicable) and without prejudice pending the outcome of the investigation.
4. If the elder body learns from CPS or police officials that criminal charges have been filed against the accused, follow steps A, B, and C above, and at step C, enact both limited contact and suspension/removal.
5. If the elder body learns from CPS or police officials that criminal proceedings have concluded, the matter should be revisited.
 - A. If criminal charges are dropped, or the result of a criminal proceeding is an acquittal, the council should decide whether to rescind its earlier action and/or take additional action.
 - B. If prosecution results in conviction, the abuser is subject to deposition (if earlier suspended) or termination of position. He or she should be denied reinstatement or re-entry to an office or a position serving youth.

Note: The advice of legal counsel should be sought if reinstatement or re-entry is being considered.

APPENDIX SECTION FORMS

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT CHURCH

I. Sexual harassment

Quid pro quo harassment: when a person submits to unwelcome sexual conduct as a condition of employment (hiring, maintaining, or avoiding dismissal). Or, when a person believes decisions after employment (promotions, compensation, evaluations, etc.) are based on whether he/she submits to unwelcome sexual conduct.

Hostile environment harassment: when unwelcome sexual conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it a) effects an employee's performance; or b) effects a person's ability to participate in or benefit from a church activity; or c) creates an intimidating, threatening, or harmful environment.

Harassment can be committed by a) a paid employee of the church; b) a designated/appointed leader of the church; c) another adult not related to the harassed person; or d) a vendor or employee of another organization contracted by the church; e) a group of minors toward a minor, a group of minors or an adult in a church-sponsored program.

II. Examples of sexual harassment at church

- Touching of a sexual nature including prolonged hugging or kissing
- Displaying or distributing sexually explicit drawings, pictures, and written materials including obscene materials and pornography
- Use of sexually explicit material in programs or activities
- Use of a computer, camera, or on-line activities to create sexual material or display sexually explicit material
- Sexual gestures, “dirty” jokes, offensive jokes, gender slurs
- Unwelcome flirtations, advances, propositions
- Persistent and severe teasing about sexual development, sexual behavior, or sexual orientation
- Graphic or degrading comments about clothing, appearance, bodily development, or anatomy
- Pressure for sexual favors, sexual contact, or sexual talk
- Talking about the harasser's or harassed sexual behavior or interests
- Spreading rumors of someone's sexual activity or sexual orientation
- Stalking another person to pursue an unwelcome relationship or for the purpose of sexual contact
- Talking about one's sexual fantasies or sexual thoughts about the other person
- Threats to, or forced attempts at engaging in unwelcome sexual conduct including sexual assault, attempted penetration, or rape
- Photographer video-taping improper situations or acts

III. Steps to prevent sexual harassment in the church:

- Establish a zero tolerance for sexual harassment in the church
- Establish guidelines for Biblical, healthy relationships between minors, between adults, and between adults and youth
- Establish a policy identifying what sexual harassment is, how to report it, and how to respond to reports within the church's policy and the framework of state, or federal law

- Include sexual harassment prevention training when conducting training for staff and volunteers, and in curriculum for adolescents
- Church leaders should be knowledgeable about sexual harassment, to encourage its prevention, and to increase preparedness to respond to allegations

IV. Steps to respond to harassment:

A. The person being harassed is advised to consider these steps

- First, take sexual harassment seriously
- Then, consider these steps:
 - If you are able, tell the harasser the harassment is unwanted and it must stop immediately. If the harassment continues, seek out an adult who supervises the harasser and inform him/her of the unwanted harassment.
 - If you are fearful or unable to talk to the harasser, seek out an adult who supervises the harasser and inform him/her of the unwanted harassment.
 - Document all efforts to get the harasser to stop.
 - Collect and retain any evidence in support of the allegations. For example, email messages, notes or letters, voice mail messages may be saved or the tape from an answering machine removed, items that are either gifts or pranks, performance appraisals or steps of discipline taken which may support the allegation.
 - Tell a responsible adult (preferable an elder) and continue sharing with this person the events that may indicate the harassment is continuing.
 - Ask someone to observe the interactions between you and the alleged harasser.
 - Provide a written report of all alleged incidents and who may have observed them to the harasser's supervisor.

B. Responding to complaints made against paid employees, church leaders, others

- Take complaints of sexual harassment seriously.
- Seek consultation as needed with legal counsel and experts.
- The supervisor should inform the alleged harasser of the complaint and offer him/her an opportunity to confront the allegations.
- If the alleged harasser either admits the allegations, or does not deny them, the supervisor needs to take action to reduce the threat of continuing harassment. Those actions may include:
 - supervise the contact between harasser and harassed
 - prohibit contact between the harasser and the harassed
 - place a written reprimand in the employee/volunteer's file
 - suspend the harasser or refuse to allow the harasser to attend church-sponsored programs until behavior ceases
 - Supervisor must notify the elder body of the allegations and the actions taken
- If harassment continues, the paid employee may be placed under progressive steps of discipline including suspension (with pay) and may be subject to termination. If the harasser is not a paid employee, other forms of church discipline may be considered including dismissal from position, or barred from attending church activities.
- If a restraining order is necessary to prevent contact with the harasser, the church should support taking such action and should enforce restraining orders issued by the court.

- Parents of minors will be informed whenever a son/daughter is alleged to have harassed another minor or has been harassed in the church facility or church sponsored program. Parents are expected to enforce discipline procedures issued by church leaders in response to the allegations.

When investigating complaints of harassment, consider the severity of the conduct, the persistent and pervasive nature of it, the impact the behavior has on the alleged victim, and whether threats were made or implied. Also, is the harasser in a position of power or authority over the alleged victim and is the complaint part of a pattern of behavior or complaints against the harasser?

SUGGESTED PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES FOR HANDLING ABUSE ALLEGATIONS OF A CHILD AGAINST A CHURCH LEADER

Approved by Synod, 1997; Revised August 2003; Adopted by Synod 2004

1. A person who receives a report of allegations of child abuse against a church leader (paid staff, officebearer, or appointed volunteer), and concludes that the allegations create a reasonable suspicion that abuse has occurred, should report the matter to local police or child-protection authorities within twenty-four hours of receiving the information.

In addition, a person who has knowledge of any circumstances that create a reasonable suspicion that a church leader has committed child abuse also should report the matter to local police or child-protection authorities within twenty-four hours of coming to that conclusion.

2. As soon as possible after notifying the appropriate authorities, the person who reports the matter should contact the person (hereafter, designated person) within the accused's church who has been designated to receive any report of alleged child abuse. [In Moline CRC the "designated" person is the chairman of council.] The person who reports the matter should describe the allegations of abuse and/or the circumstances that support the allegations of abuse to the designated person. In addition, the person who reports the matter should inform the designated person if the alleged abuse occurred in the church or in connection with a church-sponsored program.
3. The designated person should contact (1) the pastor, if the minor has not implicated the pastor; (2) a member of the church's leadership team, if the minor has not implicated this team member; (3) the church's legal counsel; and (4) the church's insurance agent.

If the alleged victim and alleged abuser are not members of the same church, each church should appoint a designated person. Together, the designated persons should maintain contact about the progress of the investigation.

Church officials may conduct their own investigation after civil authorities have begun theirs. However, church officials should not reveal the nature of the allegations to the alleged offender until the civil authorities have met with him or her.

4. If the alleged abuser admits wrongdoing against the victim at any stage of this process, the admission of guilt should be brought to the attention of the governing body of the church of the accused. The governing body should deliberate and determine outcomes according to established church polity and procedures.
5. When the designated person determines (1) that the authorities have concluded that the allegations merit serious investigation, or (2) that there is the possibility of formal charges, the designated person should notify the governing body of the alleged abuser's church.
 - a. The designated person should present to the governing body a written document that specifies the nature of the allegations and any information that is known.
 - b. The governing body should give the accused an opportunity to respond to the allegations.
 - c. In light of the information presented, the governing body should implement one or more of the following actions:

- supervised contact at church between the accused and any minors;
 - prohibited contact at church between the accused and accuser or between the accused and any minor in the congregation;
 - suspended responsibilities from office, position, or duty with pay, when applicable, and without prejudice pending the outcome of the investigation.
6. If and when the designated person learns that the authorities have filed criminal charges against the accused, then the designated person should report this information to the governing body of the alleged abuser's church.
 - a. The designated person should present to the governing body a written document specifying the nature of the allegations and any information that is known.
 - b. The governing body should give the accused an opportunity to respond to the allegations.
 - c. In light of the information presented, the governing body should implement the following actions:
 - prohibit the accused from contact with minors at church;
 - and suspend the accused from office, position, or duty with pay, when applicable, and without prejudice pending the outcome of the charges.
 7. When criminal proceedings have concluded, the governing body should promptly revisit the matter, whether the result is conviction, acquittal, or dropped charges. If the criminal charges are dropped or prosecution does not result in a conviction, the governing body should decide whether or not to rescind its earlier action and/or take additional action.
 8. If the accused, whom the governing body has previously removed or suspended from office, is found not guilty of the allegations, the governing body should not reinstate the accused to his or her previous position of leadership until they, in consultation with the police and/or child-protection authorities, legal counsel, and child abuse experts, deem it safe and proper to do so.
 9. If the accused is found guilty, the governing body may (1) subject a determined abuser (hereafter abuser) to further suspension, deposition, or termination of employment, or (2) take such other action against the abuser as the circumstances may dictate.
 10. A church leader (1) who has made a confession of child abuse, (2) who has been convicted of child abuse in a court of law, or (3) whom the governing body has adjudicated guilty of abuse of a minor should not be reinstated to the position from which he or she has been removed or suspended without the advice of the church's legal counsel.
 11. The governing body should notify the congregation when a church leader is removed or suspended from office, position, or duty pending the outcome of an investigation into an allegation of child abuse. This notice should be in writing and should protect the identity and confidentiality of the accuser. This disclosure should be pastoral, objectively factual, and not exceed the scope of the information known about the matter at that time. In addition, the governing body should not attempt to state any legal conclusions about the guilt or innocence of any person unless and until the governing body determines that a church leader is an abuser.

12. Subject to the best interest of the abused, the governing body should notify the congregation in writing if they conclude that a church leader is an abuser. This notice should protect the identity and confidentiality of any innocent parties, including the abused person. This written communication should be pastoral and objectively factual.

CHILD SAFETY COORDINATOR

“Child Safety Coordinator” will be an official office to be filled annually at the elder organizational meeting.

- This must be a separately listed office like “clerk” or “vice president”, NOT a part of the duties of a clerk or vice president.
- Two other committee members will be appointed to assist in enforcing the Child Safety policy.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS OFFICE IS TWO-FOLD:

- To protect our children and youth.
- To protect our church from liability.

DUTIES:

- Form the committee
- Review the policy annually
- Enforce the policy.

Sample of some of the duties

- Provide for education in abuse prevention
- Distribute and collect forms
- Know the procedures for dealing with an abuse incident

MOLINE CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

Volunteer Screening Form For Children or Youth Work

Confidential

This form is to be completed by all adult volunteers who will supervise or work with minors. It is being used to help Moline Christian Reformed Church provide a safe and secure environment for those children and youth who participate in our programs and use our facilities.

Date: _____

Name: _____
Last First Middle

Present Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: () _____ Work Phone: () _____

Date of Birth _____

Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a crime? _____
(If yes, please explain—attach a separate page if necessary) _____

Do you have a valid driver's license without restrictions? _____

Driver's License # _____

Have you been a member of Moline CRC for at least six months? _____

Volunteer Applicant's Statement

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I agree to abide by the decision of the church in accepting/rejecting this application and waive any claim of liability against the church.

I hereby grant permission (if needed) for the local authorities to release any information which pertains to any record of convictions contained in its files or in any criminal file maintained on me whether local, state or national. I hereby release said Police Department from any and all liability resulting from such disclosure.

I have read and understand the Child Safety policy and prevention form and agree to follow it.

Applicant's Signature: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: _____

What methods of discipline might you use in your position with children and youth? _____

What training have you received in the care and nurture of children and youth? _____

List any gifts, education, or other factors that have prepared you for children and youth work

Have you ever been convicted of, pled guilty or no contest to charges of child abuse and/or neglect? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, please explain _____

Have you ever been dismissed or terminated from a volunteer or paid position for charges of child abuse and/or neglect? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, please explain _____

D. PERSONAL REFERENCES *(Non-relatives, employers, supervisors, or church coworkers may be included)*

Name

Last

First

Middle

Address _____

City _____ State/Prov. _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

Name _____

Last

First

Middle

Address _____

City _____ State/Prov. _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

Name _____

Last

First

Middle

Address _____

City _____ State/Prov. _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

Moline Christian Reformed Church
4341 Chappell Ave
Moline, MI 49335

This form is to be filled out at the beginning of the society year for each minor

We/I _____ give permission for _____
(Parent or Guardian) Minor

to attend activities (i.e. field trips, work projects, conventions, special outings, as well as activities on the church property) sponsored by:

- _____ GEMS
- _____ Cadets
- _____ Youth Group
- _____ Sunday School
- _____ Other

We/I give permission to the leaders of the organization to secure needed emergency medical treatment for the minor named above. In case of accident or injury during the activities, we/ I release the leaders/church from all liability not covered by insurance. Parent/Guardian is responsible for insurance coverage up-to-date, and ongoing medical care. Is there pertinent medical/allergy information of which we should be informed?

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____ Telephone: (Home) _____ (Work) _____
(Cell) _____

Address _____

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

To be submitted to elders for cases of reasonable suspicion of child abuse

Confidential

Name of person completing this form _____

Today's date _____

When was the incident reported to you? _____

Description of reported or witnessed incident (report what was said to you)

Who _____

What _____

When _____

Where _____

Witness _____

Protective Services notified? _____ Date _____ Time _____ am / pm

Signature of person completing this form _____

This form needs to be submitted to the elders

Date elders received report _____