



# Reducing the Risk

Safeguard Training for Working with Youth and Children

# Why “Reducing the Risk”?

Thank you for choosing to help serve our children at The Well!

Our goal is for all children to learn about the love of God in a fun and SAFE environment!

All volunteer children’s/youth workers at The Well must learn about and implement preventative measures (policies, procedures and safeguards) that help reduce the risk of child sexual abuse in our ministries.

# What is child sexual abuse?

- ANY sexual activity with a child
- The abuser may be an adult or an adolescent/another child
- Violent/nonviolent
- All sexual abuse is criminal behavior that involves a child in a sexual way that they are not personally, socially, or developmentally ready for

# Two categories of child sexual abuse:

- Types that involve touch (caressing, kissing, touching areas that a diaper, underwear or bra would cover, any sexual act involving physical contact with a child)
- Types that do not involve touch (showing pornographic or inappropriate photos/videos, taking sexually suggestive photos/videos of a child, inappropriate comments made in person/Email/text/instant messaging/on social media, flashing, allowing a child to witness a sexual activity)

# Did you know...?

- Most child molesters are male
- Child molesters usually know their victims
- Victims of sexual abuse suffer life-long effects
- Ministry leaders who do not report child sexual abuse can be held legally responsible
- People who experience a religious conversion can still pose a threat to children

# Why are ministries targeted by predators?

- **TRUST** churches tend to be trusting of those who attend their services or are involved in other ministries
- **NEED** churches are always in need of volunteers
- **LACK OF SCREENING** most churches don't do extensive background checks
- **OPPORTUNITY** unsupervised personal contact, lack of visibility
- **ACCESS** predators are attracted to places with immediate access to potential victims in an atmosphere of complete trust

# Risk Factors

- Isolation – predators purposefully seek to isolate their victims before committing criminal sexual acts with them
- Power – perpetrators of child sexual abuse use their power (title, leadership role, age, physical strength, etc.) to take advantage of those who have less power
- Accountability – lack of accountability provides predators with access to victims in an atmosphere to carry out criminal sexual activity unchallenged

# Reducing The Risk at The Well

- NEVER 1 to 1 ratio
  - Example: Cannot have situations where 1 child to 1 adult, 1 younger child to 1 older child
  - Power balances: At least 2 adults present at all times for accountability
- Kid Zone Café
  - Only children in Hydro Kids and nursery allowed (use sign-in sheets)
  - Identifiable children's ministry volunteers only
  - No non-parent adults, no non-volunteer teens
  - "Kid Zone Only" bathroom posted
  - Café front door is to remain locked at all times (not an entrance)
- Nursery
  - Lap sitting away from private areas
  - Blankets cover children only, adult hands visible



# Reducing the Risk at The Well (continued)

- Diaper changes/toileting
  - 18yrs+ only
  - 2 adults present (visibility/accountability)
  - Seek parent help
- Photography/videography/social media
  - DO NOT take or post to social media any pictures/videos of minors without written parent consent
- Transportation
  - Adults will not transport youth/children without written parent consent
  - Follow ratio guidelines (never 1 to 1)
  - Youth/children should not ride next to an adult when being transported

# The Well's 5 Step Prevention Policy

1. 6 month rule – must actively attend The Well for 6 months or more
2. Written application submitted for review by leadership
3. 2 or more reference checks (non-family)
4. ICHAT background check
5. Attend Reducing the Risk class (annually), comprehension test upon completion

# Mandated Reporters

- Because we are a church, we are mandated reporters to Child Protective Services (CPS) and state law enforcement if we suspect child abuse of any kind
- Fill out incident report (1<sup>st</sup> drawer in café, website)
- Give incident report to pastoral staff immediately for further action
- Failure to report could result in legal action

Thank you for helping keep our kids safe!  
See website for further training materials!

