

First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh

Safe Congregation Policy and Procedures

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1 PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

- 1.1.1 To help prevent and protect First Unitarian Church children and youth from physical harm and sexual abuse when in the presence of unsupervised paid staff and volunteers. It is important that all First Unitarian Church paid staff and volunteers understand and comply with these guidelines to help ensure a safe physical environment and prevent sexual abuse against children. This policy includes policy guidelines, procedures for protection and prevention, and a volunteer application to be signed by those people working with children.
- 1.1.2 This Policy Is Designed To
- Improve the safety of children in our church programs by implementing preventive steps and by providing guidelines regarding appropriate behavior with the children and youth of our church;
 - Through preventative steps, reduce the likelihood that allegations (true or false) will be made against church staff and volunteers; and
 - Establish procedures to effectively respond to alleged incidents and incidents that may occur, whether during a church activity or at other times;
 - Provide a safe physical environment for all children by ensuring all appropriate building and physical plant safety procedures are in place and enforced.
 - This policy applies to all members, friends, and congregants that function under the auspices of First Unitarian Church, including the use of the building for denominational activities.
 - It is the responsibility of the entire congregation, in partnership with religious education parents, to create and maintain a safe environment for children and youth in our church programs. However, this policy is devoted primarily to situations in which children are in a supervised relationship with congregants other than their parents.
- 1.1.3 This is a Board policy applying to all members, friends, and staff of First Unitarian Church. The Safety Team is responsible for creating, interpreting, and revising this policy.

2 DEFINITIONS

The definitions set forth in [CPSL Title 23 PA.C.S Chapter 63, § 6303\(a\)](#) are hereby incorporated by reference into this policy, and as augmented and/or excerpted below:

1. Adult: Any person who has reached his/her 18th birthday or as defined by state law.
2. Child Emotional Abuse: Verbal or nonverbal conduct including mental exploitation, degrading communication, or humiliating or threatening conduct that may or may not include bullying or as defined by state law(see Appendix 4 and associated links).

3. Child/Youth/Minor: Any person who has not reached his/her 18th birthday or the age of majority as defined by state law. "Primary age" applies to children up to and including third grade.
4. Paid Staff: Any pastor, minister, preacher, cleric, or employee who is paid.
5. Safety Team: is the authorized body responsible for all responses to allegations/ reports of abuse or misconduct as outlined in this policy.
6. Sexual Abuse or Exploitation (incorporated by reference and excerpted from [PA Code 3490.4](#)): Any of the following if committed on a child by a perpetrator:
 - (i) Any of the following if committed on a child by a perpetrator:
 - (A) The employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of a child to engage in or assist another person to engage in sexually explicit conduct.
 - (B) A simulation of sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing a visual depiction, including photographing, videotaping, computer depicting or filming, of sexually explicit conduct.
 - (C) Any of the following offenses as defined by the crimes code:
 - (1) Rape as defined by section 3121 (relating to rape).
 - (2) Statutory sexual assault as defined by section 3122.1 (relating to statutory sexual assault).
 - (3) Involuntary deviate sexual intercourse as defined by section 3123 (relating to involuntary deviate sexual intercourse).
 - (4) Sexual assault as defined by section 3124.1 (relating to sexual assault).
 - (5) Aggravated indecent assault as defined by section 3125 (relating to aggravated indecent assault).
 - (6) Indecent assault as defined by section 3126 (relating to indecent assault).
 - (7) Indecent exposure as defined by section 3127 (relating to indecent exposure).
 - (8) Incest as defined by section 4302 (relating to incest).
 - (9) Prostitution as defined by section 5902 (relating to prostitution and related offenses).
 - (D) Exploitation, which includes any of the following:
 - (1) Looking at the sexual or other intimate parts of a child for the purpose of arousing or gratifying sexual desire in either person.
 - (2) Engaging or encouraging a child to look at the sexual or other intimate parts of another person for the purpose of arousing or gratifying sexual desire in any person involved.
 - (3) Engaging or encouraging a child to participate in sexually explicit conversation either in-person, by telephone, computer, or a computer-aided device.
7. Sexual Offender: an individual identified on the Pennsylvania State sex offender registry or an individual, whether identified on that registry or the sex offender registry of some other state, who meets the criteria of the Pennsylvania State sex offender registry.

8. Volunteer: Means any unpaid person engaged in or involved in any church sponsored activity and who is entrusted with the care and supervision of minors during that activity.

3 SAFETY AND PROTECTION IN THE CHURCH BUILDING

3.1 PARTICULAR REQUIREMENTS – BUILDING SAFETY

- 3.1.1 First aid kits, defibrillators, and fire extinguishers shall be readily available at the church building at all times. The sexton shall maintain these items.
- 3.1.2 The Lifespan Religious Education Director (LRED) and Chair of the Buildings and Grounds Committee shall develop and maintain a fire drill plan and, along with the Fire Department, annually conduct one church school fire drill. Evacuation plans shall be posted by each exit within each classroom and at each exit within the church building.
- 3.1.3 The RE wing will comply with building and fire codes.
- 3.1.4 Illicit drugs and weapons are not permitted at church events or on church grounds at any time.

3.2 TRAINING OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- 3.2.1 First Aid/CPR training from a certified first aid instructor shall be mandatory for the LRED and RE Assistant and optional for the Minister. The church shall pay any fee required for this training and retraining to maintain current certification.
- 3.2.2 Staff and volunteers will be informed of the location of first aid kits and fire extinguishers.
- 3.2.3 Teachers will be trained on procedures required for drills and emergencies.
- 3.2.4 Teachers will be required to work with children in RE classes on safety procedures.

4 PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE, HARASSMENT, AND OTHER INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT TOWARDS CHILDREN

4.1 PREVENTION THROUGH SCREENING

- 4.1.1 Staff and volunteers who provide direct care or supervision to children or youth at First Unitarian Church must meet the following criteria:
 - 4.1.1.1 Will have been an active participant at First Unitarian Church or another UU church for at least six months or have references from other UU churches that include either the Minister or Director of Religious Education. Active participants are church members or contributing friends who are involved with church committees, activities, and/or events.
 - 4.1.1.2 Advisors and mentors for Middle School and High School youth must be at least 25 years of age. Volunteers age 18-25 may serve as secondary youth advisors with direct supervision from an advisor 25 years of age or older.

- 4.1.1.3 All other volunteer religious education teachers and child supervisors must be at least 18 years old with exceptions made at the discretion of the LRED.
- 4.1.1.4 Staff and volunteers under 18 years old may be used as paid childcare providers for *event childcare* as long as they have completed the Red Cross Babysitter's Training or equivalent.
- 4.1.1.5 Staff and volunteers under 18 years old may be used as paid nursery *care providers* as long as they have completed the Red Cross Babysitter's Training or equivalent and are with a nursery care provider 25 years of age or older.
- 4.1.2 Staff and volunteers who work with adolescent youth including youth group leaders, leaders of our whole lives, and coming of age program mentors will:
 - 4.1.2.1 Staff and volunteers will complete a screening application form approved by the Board of Directors (see [Appendix 1](#) for current application form), including the Code of Ethics ([Appendix 2](#)) and all attestations contained in the application.
 - 4.1.2.2 First Unitarian Church will maintain and comply with procedures that assure paid staff and volunteers supervising minors are appropriately screened to comply with state law. Prior to entrusting volunteers with the care and supervision of minors, First Unitarian Church will obtain:
 - Pennsylvania Child Abuse Clearance
 - Pennsylvania Criminal Record Check
 - FBI fingerprint clearances if they have not lived in PA for the preceding ten years. These individuals will have repeated FBI fingerprint checks done, as required until they meet the ten-year residency rule
 - Code of Ethics form signed
 - Pennsylvania Residency Statement form signed
 - Approved Adult: Review of Legal Disqualifiers Form signed
 - 4.1.2.3 Volunteers who do not pass these clearances and submit signed paperwork will not be able to work with children.
 - 4.1.2.4 The Pennsylvania Child Abuse Clearance, Pennsylvania Criminal Record Check, and FBI fingerprint clearances are valid for 36 months per Pennsylvania law. First Unitarian Church requires the Code of Ethics, Pennsylvania Residency Statement, and Approved Adult: Review of Legal Disqualifiers Form to be signed every 36 months. Background clearance records will be kept for 20 years.
 - 4.1.2.5 These documents will be considered confidential, will be kept in a secure location in the Religious Education Office, and will be reviewed only by the Minister, the LRED, and the President of the Board of Trustees.
- 4.1.3 All paid staff must meet the First Unitarian Church Personnel Policy requirements.
- 4.1.4 Individuals who have been convicted of, are under current indictment for, or self-disclose any act of sexual misconduct involving a child or of child abuse are precluded from participation in the RE program and other church activities primarily involving children or youth, under the guidelines of a Limited Access Agreement ([Appendix 7](#)).

4.2 PREVENTION THROUGH TRAINING AND EDUCATION

For our volunteers working with children, we recognize the need for education and training in some form of child abuse prevention or child protection. Greater understanding of the complexities of sexuality and abuse will help us to avoid situations that could lead to abuse or false accusations. The LRED will see to the implementation of the following training requirements:

- 4.2.1 Before working with children or youth, all RE teachers, advisors, and mentors:
 - 4.2.1.1 Shall be directed to the church website to read this policy.
 - 4.2.1.2 Will have attended at least one training session to understand:
 - The Code of Ethics which apply when adults supervise children and youth in a religious community (see Appendix 2);
 - Definitions of child abuse and other inappropriate conduct (see [Appendix 4](#));
 - Church policies that govern working with children or youth;
 - The rationale behind screening procedures; and
 - Reporting procedures for observed or suspected misconduct.
 - 4.2.1.3 This training session may be incorporated into a broader orientation session for teachers or youth leaders and will be offered at least once annually by the LRED or their designee.
 - 4.2.1.4 The Board will make this Safety policy readily available on our church website.
 - 4.2.1.5 For new members of the church, the new member orientation packet will include a summary description of this policy that includes information on where the full policy is located.

4.3 PREVENTION THROUGH SUPERVISION

- 4.3.1 General Supervision Guidelines
 - 4.3.1.1 Parents or guardians of children in Sunday school are responsible for supervising their children before and after classes. Parents of preschool through third graders must pick up their children promptly after the formal church service ends. Older children and youth may be dismissed independently.
 - 4.3.1.2 Children and youth will not be dismissed from class until the Sunday morning church service concludes.
 - 4.3.1.3 Parenting-adults of PreK-K children must sign and have on file a form granting permission that someone other than themselves may pick up their child at the end of a class period.
 - 4.3.1.4 Parents of Nursery age children must fill out Visitor and Special Needs forms (if necessary) and sign in and out of the room with the Nursery caregiver. There must be at least one caregiver for every four toddlers in the Nursery. Parents will be asked to volunteer to stay in the nursery to meet this ratio if needed.
- 4.3.2 Sunday Morning Guidelines
 - 4.3.2.1 At least two adults, including childcare workers, should be present in each classroom on Sunday mornings, and during any church-related activity involving children or youth including trips. Exceptions to this guideline require

written permission from parents (for example, to transport children from one location to another).

- 4.3.2.2 If any one adult is temporarily alone with a group of children at First Unitarian Church, the window coverings will be open or the door to the classroom will remain open. The LRED or her/his designated representative will check in with the group.
 - 4.3.2.3 Corporal punishment or abusive language will not be used under any circumstance.
 - 4.3.2.4 The building will not be open to children or youth for any activity until two adults are present. Parents are responsible for supervising their children or youth until two adult supervisors are present in the church building for any church-sponsored activity.
 - 4.3.2.5 A roaming supervisor (like the LRED) will be present in the RE Wing during Sunday school to provide supervision for children going to the lavatory.
- 4.3.3 Transportation Guidelines
- 4.3.3.1 Generally, parents or guardians of minor children must supervise their children at all church outings. Volunteers and compensated employees are not allowed to be alone in a car with one child or youth except by prior parental arrangement and notification of the LRED.
 - 4.3.3.2 There shall be at least one adult (age 25 or older) for every six Junior High youth at overnights and one adult for every eight Senior High youth. There shall be at least one adult for every five children for church-sponsored field trips.
 - 4.3.3.3 Drivers who transport children must be at least 25 years old.
 - 4.3.3.4 If transporting children off-site for more than one-day chaperones must have permission slips and medical release forms for each child.
 - 4.3.3.5 Leaders must have a list of names, emergency contacts, and medical conditions with them at all times.
 - 4.3.3.6 Every driver of any vehicle used to transport children or youth must have proof of auto insurance.
 - 4.3.3.7 Every person in the vehicle must wear a seatbelt at all times.

5 REPORTING PROCEDURE - ADDRESSING AN INCIDENT OR POSSIBLE PROBLEM

Should we suspect or be confronted with an incident or disclosure of sexual abuse or harassment we intend to respond rationally, compassionately, and with unity-of-purpose.

One of our first steps in creating a healing community is to create an environment of trust within which both victims and offenders feel safe enough to speak about what has happened. Given the obstacles that victims and offenders must overcome in order to speak up, any disclosure must be met with an appropriate and supportive reaction on the part of the person who has heard the disclosure and the community.

With this concern in mind, we have established a "Safety Team" that is charged with responding to Sexual Misconduct and Abuse.

5.1 THE SAFETY TEAM

- 5.1.1 The Safety Team will be comprised of the Minister, LRED, and three additional members nominated by the LRED and Minister and approved by the Board of Trustees. It will be established and in place at all times, with the names and phone numbers of team members available to all members and friends of the church.
 - 5.1.1.1 Additional members will be qualified by their (1) professional or volunteer experience in working with children and/or child abuse issues or through other special training such as the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence workshops; (2) understanding of this policy and other UUA "Safe Congregation" material; and (3) knowledge about available resources and reporting procedures for children, including applicable Pennsylvania state laws.
 - 5.1.1.2 Members of the Safety Team will have clearances set forth in [Section 4.1.2.2](#) including Mandatory Reporter training certification, and sign a Confidentiality Agreement (see [Appendix 5](#)). There no term limits for appointed members.
- 5.1.2 The Safety Team serves three purposes:
 - 5.1.2.1 Individually and collectively, to offer confidential support, advice, and counsel, with concern for the safety of all parties involved. The team may be used as a resource for children or adult survivors of sexual abuse, victims of violence, and perpetrators in treatment as they look to their religious community for support until a professional is identified.
 - 5.1.2.2 The second purpose is to aid in filing a report to Children, Youth and Families (CYF) or (Child Line) if a member of the congregation observes or has reasonable cause to suspect behavior they believe constitutes physical or sexual abuse of a child, or if someone discloses such abuse.
 - 5.1.2.3 The third purpose is to review at least annually this Safety policy.

5.2 SUSPICION OF CHILD OR YOUTH ABUSE

If a worker, volunteer or any other adult suspects the abuse of a minor during a First Unitarian Church program or event, the person must immediately report it to the LRED, the Minister or a Safety Team member. The LRED will keep a written record of who reported the suspected abuse and the circumstances described by the observer.

5.3 CONFIDENTIALITY

- 5.3.1 We recognize that while we must encourage reporting of all concerns or suspicions of child abuse, harassment, or other inappropriate conduct, reporting must occur with a guarantee of maximum confidentiality so that no one needs fear retaliation or recrimination. Please see [Appendix 6](#) for a fuller explanation, with examples, of why confidentiality is so important.
 - 5.3.1.1 Anyone who is involved in church activities: a child, youth, teacher, volunteer, staff member, congregant, or associated person may have a safety concern that should be reported to the LRED, Minister, or a Safety Team member. This includes a situation in which it is discovered that a person who is attending the church has a history of abusive behavior.

- 5.3.1.2 The congregant who raises a concern will ensure maximum confidentiality in the initial discussion and written documentation of a report. All written documents will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the Church Business Office.
- 5.3.1.3 The LRED, Minister, and all Safety Team members will sign a confidentiality agreement for matters related to this Safety Policy (see [Appendix 5](#)).
- 5.3.2 Confidentiality is maintained at all times within the following groups. The level of disclosure is determined by the LRED and Minister, based on the seriousness of the allegation.
 - 5.3.2.1 At the lowest level, only the LRED, Minister, and one other Safety Team member who originally received the report (if any) will have knowledge of a report.
 - 5.3.2.2 At the next higher level of concern, the LRED and Minister will discuss the details of the concern or allegation with the full Safety Team and will inform the President of the Board of Trustees that a confidential report has been made. However, in this case, the LRED and Minister will discuss the circumstances of the report without including identifying information.
 - 5.3.2.3 At the next level of concern, the LRED and Minister will discuss the details of the concern or allegation and identify those involved with the Safety Team and will inform the President of the Board of Trustees that a confidential report has been made.
 - 5.3.2.4 At the highest level of concern, the LRED, Minister, Safety Team, and President of the Board of Trustees will all have identifying information and a report will be made to CYF by the LRED or Minister, allowing for as much confidentiality as permissible by law.
- 5.3.3 The LRED and Minister will strongly encourage the victim, the alleged perpetrator, and the reporting person to maintain maximum confidentiality within appropriate legal constraints.
- 5.3.4 When it is deemed necessary to make a report to the Safety Team at levels C or D (see [Appendix 8](#)), the reporting person will meet in person with the Safety Team within 24 hours of the concern being raised. In order for the Safety Team to respond appropriately and fairly, all members of the Safety Team shall make every effort to be present for the initial interview. The meeting will be held if 60% of the team is present. All members must make every effort to attend all further meetings.
- 5.3.5 Except for compelling circumstances, no identifying information about the victim, alleged perpetrator, or third party reporting person, or information about the circumstances of the abuse, will be released to members of the congregation at large. Compelling circumstances include, but are not limited to actions that would constitute a crime; criminal charges have been filed; or disregard by the accused of measures that the Safety Team has deemed necessary (i.e. no involvement with activities involving children).

5.4 ETHICS OF ADULT LEADERS

Anyone who has concerns about inappropriate sexual conduct, violence, or physical abuse by childcare workers, teachers, or other people working with children or youth in this congregation will also be able to receive direction from the Safety Team. See [Appendix 4](#) for guidance.

5.5 YOUTH WHO MAY BE ABUSERS

- 5.5.1 One of the most difficult possible situations is when a teenager or child in the congregation has been accused of inappropriately sexual touching a child in the congregation. If an older child forces sex on a younger child or exposes his or her genitals to a younger child, both of these children will need professional help. If an older child demonstrates an inappropriate sexual interest in younger children that does not extend to these behaviors, the situation should be further investigated.
- 5.5.2 After such an incident comes to the attention of the minister, LRED, or member of the Safety Team, they should initiate contact individually with the parents of both children to discuss the allegation and next steps. Depending on the state law and the nature of the incident, it may be necessary to call Child Protective Services. Regardless, before the initiator is allowed to continue to attend religious education, this child should receive an extensive assessment by a child psychologist or psychiatrist with experience with children with sexual behavior problems. It is NOT the responsibility of the minister or the response team to decide if abuse has occurred, but rather to assure that such assessment does take place.
- 5.5.3 It may make sense to remove the child from religious education during this time. It would certainly be prudent for the child not to be allowed unsupervised time with other children until the assessment is complete.
- 5.5.4 If an evaluation by a trained professional indicates that the child has a sexual behavior problem that is likely to be repetitive, the Minister, the LRED, the Safety Team, and the parents need to meet to decide how and if the child can safely be involved with the Religious Education or Youth Group program. A modified Limited Access Agreement shall be developed and signed by both the child and the parents. In some cases, it may be necessary to deny the young person continued involvement with other children until treatment is completed.
- 5.5.5 In some situations, a family will want to bring a child who has been treated for sexual offenses back into the congregation after treatment is completed. In such cases, the steps for involving an adult offender can be followed, including a Limited Access Agreement signed by both the youth and their parents. In any of these cases, pastoral care and support for the families involved are crucial. This will be very difficult for the parents involved, and they will need the support of their church community, especially the Minister and the LRED.

Helping them to feel welcome and supported is essential, as is the ongoing offer of ministry.

5.6 FALSE ACCUSATIONS

Protecting adults who teach in the RE program or otherwise interact with children at the church from false or mistaken allegations is also an important goal of this policy. A key way to prevent false or mistaken allegations is to abide by the prevention guidelines outlined in the Prevention portion of this policy. We should be sensitive to the disruption and damage a false accusation may cause to both the adults and the children involved. This is true even when the accusation is one due to a misunderstanding or misinterpretation of what seems a child's straightforward report of an event.

5.7 OTHER INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Some incidents or allegations in RE or other children or youth programs may involve behavior that is not clearly child abuse but may be in other ways deemed inappropriate by a parent, by the LRED or by the RE Council. In such cases, the Safety Team, including the LRED, the Minister and appropriate members of the RE Council may be called together to review the situation and decide what action to take.

6 RESPONDING TO A REPORT OF A POTENTIAL PROBLEM

6.1 ROLE OF A CONGREGANT WHO RECEIVES A REPORT OF ABUSE

- 6.1.1 Abuse, neglect, or violence may be self-reported by a child or may be suspected of the child's behavior or physical signs. Teachers, childcare workers, or other adults in our community should bring their concerns to the LRED, the Minister, or another member of the Safety Team immediately.
- 6.1.2 Children most often make abuse disclosures to trusted adults. Sometimes, when the child does not realize the circumstances of the abuse are abnormal, the disclosure is made in the course of play or discussion about something completely unrelated. This circumstance generally occurs with very young children. More often, the child realizes the circumstances of the abuse are abnormal. The child typically bears a great deal of shame around the abuse, feeling he or she somehow caused or is to blame for the abuse. It is critical in these circumstances to make the child feel safe to disclose the abuse.
- 6.1.3 Although it is vital to have concerns brought to the LRED, Minister, or a member of the Safety Team, the most important support a teacher can give to a child revealing abuse is to listen, fully and carefully. They must provide an appropriate, safe setting and accept the child's story. A teacher should not dispute the story, point out inconsistencies, or point out how unlikely it seems. One should always affirm the importance of a child's telling their story.

6.2 ROLE OF THE MINISTER, LRED, OR OTHER SAFETY TEAM MEMBER WHO RECEIVES A REPORT OF ABUSE

When an allegation of child abuse occurring during a church program is reported to the Minister or LRED, the Minister and LRED will determine the level of concern as outlined above in the [Confidentiality section](#) and proceed accordingly (see [Appendix 8](#) for a diagram of the process). The first priority, however, is to ensure the protection of the children, and if indicated, the Minister or LRED needs to take immediate, appropriate action such as removing an alleged perpetrator from contact with the child or youth. If reported to another Safety Team member, the responsible person receiving the allegation should take the necessary steps to:

1. Inform the Minister and/or LRED
2. Take appropriate action to ensure the protection of the children in the church.
3. Convene a meeting of a Safety Team if, after consulting with Minister and LRED, the level of concern warrants.
4. Abide by Pennsylvania law on reporting child abuse.

6.3 ROLE OF THE SAFETY TEAM IN RESPONSE TO A REPORT OF ABUSE

6.3.1 The Safety Team does not have the legal authority or the expertise to determine guilt or innocence. Instead, it is called upon to protect members of the church community, and to ensure that the victim and accused are treated with dignity and respect.

6.3.2 The Safety Team has a broad continuum of possible resolutions to a situation. In the most serious cases, they will be sure that it is reported to CYF and the accused is removed from working with children and youth. In addition, in the most serious cases, when CYF has determined that abuse did in fact occur, it may be necessary for the team to inform the Board and parents of other children who have had contact with this person. Where concerns are less serious, options such as additional supervision or training for the adult or not asking the person to teach again is a possible outcome. In cases where a misunderstanding seems to be the problem, the Safety Team will encourage, and can offer to facilitate, communication between the parties; they may also facilitate extra training for a teacher.

6.3.3 If the complaint concerns a member of the Safety Team or a relative, that person will be excused from participation and replaced by a suitable alternative. If the complaint concerns a paid staff member, including the Minister or LRED, the CER Congregational Life Consultant will be considered a member of the First Unitarian Church Safety Team. If the complaint is against the Minister, Unitarian Universalist Minister's Association (UUMA) policies and procedures apply (see <http://www.uuma.org/Documents/guidelines.html>).

6.4 ROLE OF THE BOARD

The President of the Board of Trustees of the First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh will be informed about any allegation of abuse in which the Safety Team is involved. Depending on the level of concern, identities of the victim, accused and reporter may be withheld. In the most serious situation, in which a staff member violates the policy, the Board will make the final determination of any additional consequences appropriate to the violation of this policy, including, but not limited to, termination of a staff person (except for Minister). Violation of this policy by the Minister or LRED shall constitute good cause for discipline under the terms of the Minister's or LRED's contract.

6.4.1 The Board shall also inform the following of any determination of serious violations by the Minister of this policy:

- CER Congregational Life Consultant
- Director of the Department of Ministry of the UUA
- Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the UUA
- Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association

6.5 REPORTING TO POLICE IN RESPONSE TO CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR

When an allegation of misbehavior constitutes a crime, a report must be made to the police.

6.6 INVOLVEMENT BY THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

6.6.1 The Minister and the LRED are mandated reporters, so are required by law to file a report with the State when they suspect a child in the place of their employment has been abused. However, if a church member, friend or staff person suspects that either a child has been abused, while in the church program or at other times, the person with the suspicion can report the incident to State authorities with the support of the Safety Team.

6.6.2 In Pennsylvania, the [Child Protective Services Law {CPSL} 23 Pa. C.S., Chapter 63](#), child abuse must involve a child (a person under 18), a perpetrator, and an act of abuse. A Perpetrator is a person who has committed child abuse and is: a) a parent of a child, b) a paramour of a child's parent, c) an individual 14 years of age or older residing in the same home as the child, or d) a person responsible for the child's welfare.

6.6.3 Anyone may make a report to ChildLine and is protected under the Child Protective Services Law from criminal and civil immunity. Child Line—**1-800-932-0313** - is a toll-free, 24-hour, 7-day-a-week hotline established by PA Department of Human Services to receive reports of suspected abuse and neglect of children. The reports are forwarded to the local office of Children, Youth, and Families (CYF) for investigation. You may report anonymously; however, giving your name assists CYF if they have questions about the report or need to verify information. In Allegheny County, you can also contact the local Office of Children, Youth, and Families' Intake Office directly: 412-473-2000.

- 6.6.4 What information must be given to CYF? Identifying information on the child, the child's family, and the alleged perpetrator as well as information regarding the suspected abuse.

6.7 LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND RESTRICTIONS WITH CHILDREN

- 6.7.1 In order to protect the children and youth in our programs from potential risk and to protect the accused from further suspicion, decisions about removing the alleged perpetrator from interacting with children in the RE program or other church programs will be made by the Safety Team, including the LRED and the Minister. A decision should be made and timely action taken based on the possible threat to the children, the credibility and seriousness of the allegation, and other related factors. If the reported abuse involves a worker or volunteer at First Unitarian Church, the LRED will immediately relieve that person of any duties involving supervision, care or teaching of children and youth at First Unitarian Church until the matter is resolved. Actions other than permanent removal from teaching will be given full consideration depending upon the situation. Alternative actions might include additional training, review of the policy or changing classrooms.
 - 6.7.1.1 Even if an allegation is not reported to the Office of Children, Youth and Families (CYF), the adult against whom the allegations are made may be asked to refrain from teaching or otherwise interacting with the child or children in question for the adult's own protection.
 - 6.7.1.2 If a report is made to CYF, this leave will be mandatory.
 - 6.7.1.3 The Safety Team may also determine, even without an accusation of abuse made, that they have a reason(s) for concern that a volunteer's contact with children or youth in our congregation potentially places both the volunteer and the children at risk of incident or accusation. For this reason, the Safety Team is authorized to restrict an individual from teaching in the RE program, volunteering or chaperoning children's events, or being present at RE or youth activities, or otherwise restricting contact with children and youth.
 - 6.7.1.4 If disputes arise out of the actions taken by the LRED, the Minister, or the Safety Team, the matter may be taken to the Board. However, the LRED and the RE Team (together) retain the independent right and responsibility to screen and authorize volunteers for teaching in the RE program, while the LRED and the Safety Team will make final decisions about removing a teacher or otherwise restricting an individual's contact with children and youth on church property or at church-sponsored events.
 - 6.7.1.5 We must assure that the convicted sex offender does not have the opportunity in our congregations to re-offend again. This includes avoiding situations where they can be accused falsely. The fact is that a person with a history of a sex offense against children should never be allowed to be with children, work with children and youth, or socialize with children at the congregation. No person who has been convicted of, or who has an unresolved accusation of, any sexual misconduct can be permitted to be involved in any religious education or youth group activities.

- 6.7.1.6 If the offender refuses to restrict his or her activities, it is then appropriate to deny the person access to congregation functions and church property. An offender who refuses to sign a Limited Access Agreement should know that if they enter the congregation or its property, they will be asked to leave by a member of the Safety Team or the Board of Trustees. If the person further refuses, the local police will be called for assistance.
- 6.7.1.7 The Safety Team should meet at least quarterly with any individual with whom it has a Limited Access Agreement to review the arrangement and address any concerns. If the Minister or the Religious Educator changes, as well as the chair of the Board of Trustees, it is important that the departing person informs the new person of this situation to ensure the provision of pastoral support for the offender as well as continuity of awareness of the situation. In sharing information appropriately, it is also important to remain aware of confidentiality and privacy for all involved.
- 6.7.2 Reasons for Excluding a Person from all congregation activities:
- Refusal for the minister to contact the treatment provider and parole officer
 - Refusal to go for a risk assessment with a qualified therapist
 - Report by a treatment provider the individual is at too high a risk for recidivism
 - Refusal to sign a Limited Access Agreement
 - Refusal to comply with the requirements of the Limited Access Agreement
- 6.7.2.1 Once an individual decides that they can comply with these conditions, the process would begin again to reassess the individual and see if they could be welcomed back into the life of the congregation again.

7 APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1 FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH VOLUNTEER APPLICATION AND SCREENING FORM

The First Unitarian Church Pittsburgh Volunteer Application is hereby incorporated by reference and [found here](#). This application includes:

1. Applicant Information
2. Volunteer Experience
3. Criminal History
4. Code of Ethics Statement
5. Agreement to Teach Statement
6. Pennsylvania Residency Statement for Volunteers Working with Children
7. Swear & Affirm Disclosure Statement

APPENDIX 2 CODE OF ETHICS FOR ADULTS AND OLDER YOUTH WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

[Adopted by the Unitarian Universalist Association](#) 1986

Adults and older youth who are in leadership roles are in a position of stewardship and play a key role in fostering spiritual development of both individuals and the community. It is, therefore, especially important that those in leadership positions be well qualified to provide the special nurture, care, and support that will enable children and youth to develop a positive sense of self and a spirit of independence and responsibility.

The relationship between youth and their leaders must be one of mutual respect if a positive potential is to be realized. There are no more important areas of growth than those of self-worth and the development of a healthy identity as a sexual being. Adults play a key role in assisting children and youth in these areas of growth. Wisdom dictates that children, youth, and adults suffer damaging effects when leaders become sexually involved with young persons in their care; therefore, leaders will refrain from engaging in sexual, seductive, or erotic behavior with children and youth. Neither shall they sexually harass or engage in behavior with youth that constitutes verbal, emotional or physical abuse.

Leaders shall be informed of the code of ethics and agree to it before assuming their role. In cases of violation of this code, appropriate action will be taken.

I have read and understood the above statements of position, expectations, and actions.

Signed _____ Date _____

APPENDIX 3 THE ROLE OF ADULTS WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN OUR CHURCH

Adapted from the [UUA Congregational Handbook](#), 2005

Adults working with children and youth in the context of our Unitarian Universalist faith have a crucial and privileged role, one that can carry a great deal of power and influence. Whether acting as a youth advisor, chaperone, childcare worker, teacher, choir director, Minister, or in any other role, adults have a special opportunity to interact with young people in ways that are affirming and inspiring to young people and adults.

Adults can be mentors, role models, and trusted friends of children and youth. They can be teachers, counselors, and Ministers. Helping our children grow up to be safe and responsible adults can be a meaningful and joyful experience for the adult and a lifetime benefit to the young person.

While it is important that adults be capable of meaningful friendships with the young people with whom they work, adults must exercise good judgment and mature wisdom in using their influence with children and young adults and refrain from using young people to fulfill their own needs. Young people are in a vulnerable position when dealing with adults and may find it difficult to speak out about inappropriate behavior by adults.

Adult leaders need to possess a special dedication to working with young people in ways that affirm the Unitarian Universalist Association Principles. Good communication skills, self-awareness, and understanding of others, sensitivity, problem-solving and decision-making skills, and a positive attitude are important attributes. Additionally, adult religious leaders need to be people who:

- i. Have a social network outside of their religious education responsibility in which to meet their own needs for friendship, affirmation, and self-esteem; and
- ii. Are willing and able to seek assistance from colleagues and religious professionals when they become aware of a situation that requires expert help or intervention.

APPENDIX 4 WHAT COUNTS AS INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT TOWARDS CHILDREN OR YOUTH IN OUR CHURCH?

Revised in part from the UUA pamphlet "Honoring the Children" and the UUA recommended resource "[Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in Your Church](#)"

The UUA defines child abuse as "an act committed by a parent, caregiver, or person in a position of trust that harms or threatens to harm a child's well-being or physical or mental health." Child abuse is also against the law.

There are four categories of child abuse according to the UUA:

1) Physical Abuse

Deliberately inflicting bodily harm to a child. Instances of child abuse include violent assault with hands, feet, a knife, or another implement, or burns, fractures, and bruises resulting from being beaten, shaken, or thrown. Brief passive restraint for protecting children and youth is not considered abusive.

2) Sexual Abuse

Engaging in sexualized behavior, verbal or physical, with a child; using a child for the sexual gratification of an adult or older child. Any time a child is used for the sexual stimulation of an adult or a significantly older child, abuse has occurred. The child is powerless either to consent to or resist such sexual acts. Sexual abuse can include fondling, sexual intercourse, forced participation in sexual acts, incest, and exploitation for the purpose of pornography or prostitution. Child sexual abuse is illegal regardless of whether the child "consents" or not. Consent is not an issue. The offender bears the entire responsibility for the abuse whatever form it takes.

Child sexual abuse may be violent or non-violent. All child sexual abuse is an exploitation of a child's vulnerability and powerlessness in which the abuser is fully responsible for the actions. Child sexual abuse includes behaviors that involve touching and non-touching aspects.

Types of sexual abuse that involve touching include:

- i) Sexual fondling
- ii) Oral, genital, and/or anal penetration
- iii) Intercourse
- iv) Forcible rape

Types of sexual abuse that do not involve touching include:

- i) Verbal comments such as statements intended to seduce or stimulate children, comments calling sexual attention to body parts, or references to sexual activity
- ii) Pornographic videos
- iii) Obscene phone calls
- iv) Exhibitionism

3) Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse may be very difficult to identify and document. Emotional abuse deeply affects a child's self-esteem by subjecting a child to verbal assault or emotional cruelty. It can include close confinement, inadequate nurturance, extreme discipline, or deliberately permitting destructive behaviors such as drug or alcohol abuse.

4) Neglect

Children have basic physical, nutritional, and environmental needs that must be supplied. Chronic withholding of food, clothing, medication, and proper living quarters, as well as abandonment, are all acts of neglect. Neglect can include physical, emotional, or educational neglect through such actions as inadequate supervision, health hazards in the home, refusing to seek treatment for illnesses, providing inadequate emotional nurturance, and deliberately permitting chronic truancy.

NOTE: The foregoing arguments that which is extensively defined in [PA State law](#). If we only prohibit what the state can realistically respond to, we may not be adequately protecting our children.

APPENDIX 5 CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

To be signed by all members of the Safety Team including the LRED and Minister as well as the President of the Board of Trustees and any other Board member who may be entrusted with confidential information.

Abuse and issues of inappropriate conduct are highly sensitive matters. In order to respect the identity of victims, the accused, reporters, and their families, members of the Safety Team, including the Minister and LRED, will not disseminate to the congregation (except in compelling circumstances as determined by the Minister in consultation with the Safety Team):

1. The identity of the victim, the accused, and/or the reporting person
2. The details of the allegation
3. Any other identifying information

If a report is made to the President of the Board of Directors, those Directors who have received any identifying information will not disseminate the information to any members of the congregation.

All information, either written or communicated verbally, which pertains to sexual abuse of congregation members, is confidential information, and must not be shared with anyone without written consent, except at the highest level of concern, when a report must be made to CYF. Mandated reporters (the Minister and LRED) will follow PA State law in supplying information at the time of reporting.

I understand and agree to follow the confidentiality procedures of the First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh.

Signed _____ Date _____

APPENDIX 6 BALANCING CONFIDENTIALITY WITH THE RIGHT TO BE INFORMED AND CONSULTED

1. Why protect the confidentiality of an alleged victim or a reporter?

The primary reason to protect confidentiality is that many cases of abuse will not be reported otherwise. This is the reason that many states, including ours, have laws allowing confidential and anonymous reporting. Thus, PA laws make explicit that the prevention of abuse has a higher priority than the right of an accused perpetrator to know a third party accuser. If we refuse to offer confidentiality to victims of abuse in our church, we will increase the likelihood of ongoing and repeated abuse; consequently increasing our liability.

2. Why do victims feel the need for confidentiality?

Abuse is grounded in secrecy, fear, and shame. While a primary goal of reporting abuse is to stop the victimization, coming forward actually increases the risk to the victim in the short run, with no guarantee that the abuse will be stopped. The risk is vastly increased when confidentiality is breached, and people who know little about the circumstances and the nature of abuse spread their misinterpretations. One extremely common misinterpretation is to blame the victims.

The risks to the victim range from not being believed (a form of re-victimization) to retribution by the abuser or his/her supporters. A victim's reputation, self-respect, and safety that are endangered by the abuse itself are further endangered when coming forward. In addition, because this is a church, a victim is at risk of losing a primary community and spiritual resource at a time when he/she is most in need of such. If a victim can report what has happened privately, this significantly reduces the increase in risk.

3. Why do reporters of abuse need confidentiality?

There are two principal reasons for protecting the identity of reporters. First, the identity of the victim often may be deduced from the identity of the reporter, unnecessarily creating the risks described above. Second, while the reporter may not be at risk of abuse in the same way as the victim, the reporting of abuse may expose them to the same risks to reputation, self-esteem, safety, and community. The motives of supporters are often questioned in the same way as those of victims. Harassment and ostracism may result. In addition, those who observe this punishment of reporters will be less likely to report abuse.

4. What are examples of times when abuse would not be reported if we did not protect confidentiality?

- a) A Sunday school teacher, who was abused as a child, notices one of the children in her class is exhibiting symptoms that remind her of her own abuse. The child has bruises many weeks (more than other children in the class have) and is losing weight. She suspects the parents. The teacher is traumatized by her own memories and is unsure about her suspicions. She wants to be sure the child is all right but is afraid of her own history of abuse becoming public knowledge

and worries about the safety of the child if what she says is handled badly. Therefore, she tries to ignore it and hopes for the best.

- b) A 14-year-old girl is being harassed by one of the older boys at Church. She is trying to figure out ways to stay away, and tells her friend, "I'll just die if anyone finds out I told about this."
- c) A man new to the community starts coming to the Church, only to discover that a man who abused him when he was a teenager is a member. He does not want to confront his perpetrator. Moreover, he needs to devote what time and energy he has to a new job. However, the more he thinks about it, the more he worries about the safety of the teenagers in the Church. If he knew that his name would not be breached, he would call the Minister, but he is not sure and so he does not.

APPENDIX 7 FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH OF PITTSBURGH LIMITED ACCESS AGREEMENT

CONFIDENTIAL

First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh has a reason for concern that your contact with children and/or youth in our congregation places both you and them at risk of incident or accusation. First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh thus stipulates the policy guidelines in the Limited Access Agreement. Within these guidelines, First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh welcomes your participation in adult-only activities such as worship services, committee meetings, adult discussion groups, and adult social events. The guidelines for activities, which includes children, follows:

1. Avoid all interaction with children and youth on church property or at church-sponsored events, including coffee hour and intergenerational events. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - a) Refraining from any physical contact with children and youth.
 - b) Not participating in, volunteering or chaperoning events for children or youth, including religious education classes, stories or talks for worship, youth group events, activities during intergenerational events and driving or otherwise transporting children and/or youth.
 - c) Remain in the presence of another adult who knows your situation at all times when children are in the church building.
 - d) Not entering into conversations with children.
2. You may not enter the RE wing on Sundays before all children have been dismissed from classes.
3. First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh must provide safety for a variety of groups that use the building during the week. To that end, you may not enter the church building unsupervised when activities involving children are in session. You may not possess or borrow a key to any church building.
4. First Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh will respect your privacy and right to confidentiality. Our primary responsibility; however, is to ensure that the church is a safe place for children and youth. Please consider the Minister and the Lifespan Religious Education Director as your points of contact should further developments or questions arise. You are required to contact them in advance of the service or activity, in which you plan to participate.
5. Any person affected by this process has the right to petition the Safety Team for appeal. The Safety Team will convene within ten days to consider the petition. The decision of the Safety Team in this regard is final upon a majority vote at a legally constituted meeting.
6. This agreement will be reviewed every three (3) months.

I have reviewed this policy and agree to abide by it or I will be required to relinquish my participation and membership in this church and be denied access to congregation functions and church property.

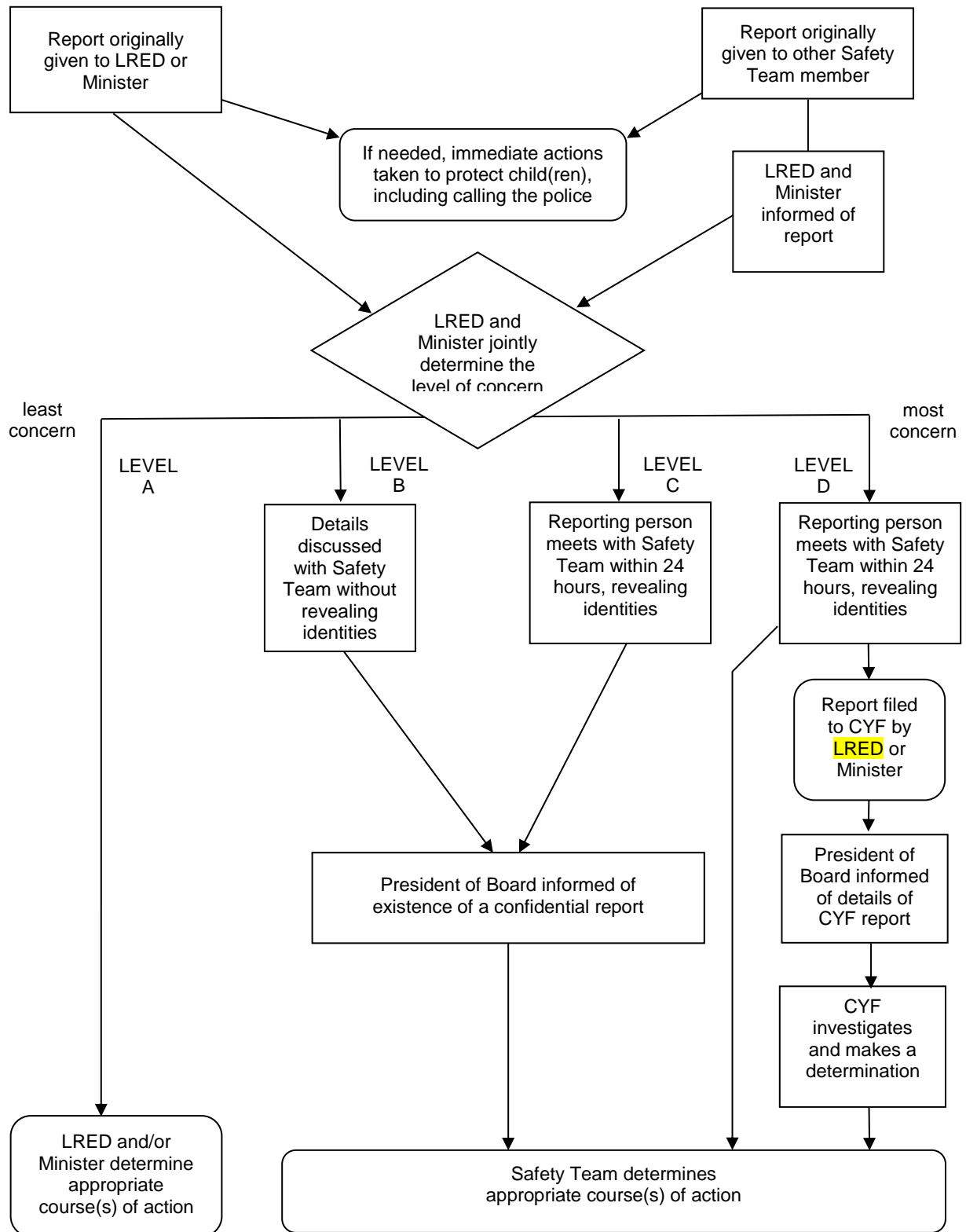
Signature

Date

Witness

Date

APPENDIX 8 PROCESS OF RESPONDING TO REPORTS



APPENDIX 9 RESOURCES

For a more comprehensive list of organizations that deal with sexual abuse, go to [Stop It Now!!](#)

General Information about Child Sexual Abuse

Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
<http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/>

SUSPECT CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT? CALL CHILDLINE: **1-800-932-0313**

Pennsylvania Family Support Alliance

2000 Linglestown Road, Suite 301
Harrisburg, PA 17110
1-800-448-4906 (in PA)
Local: (717) 238-0937
Fax: (717) 238-4315
<http://www.pa-fsa.org/>

ChildHelp USA – National Child Abuse Hotline

1-800-422-4453
Hotline is staffed 24 hours, 7 days a week.
National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
PO Box 1182
Washington, DC 20013
1-800-422-4453
<https://www.childhelp.org/hotline/>

Prevent Child Abuse America

228 South Wabash Avenue
10th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604
PHONE 312 663 3520
FAX 312 939 8962
EMAIL mailbox@preventchildabuse.org
<http://preventchildabuse.org/>

STOP IT NOW!!

PO Box 495
Haydenville, MA 01039
1-888-Prevent
www.stopitnow.org

(Their comprehensive resource guide includes a more extensive list of resources than are presented here.)

Information about Sex Offenders

29 | Revised June 2017-January 2018; Approved by Board of Trustees, February 21, 2018.

Center for Sex Offender Management

Leilah Gilligan
Senior Manager
Center for Sex Offender Management
Email: lgilligan@cepp.com www.csom.org

Kempe Center | Pediatric Section of Child Abuse and Neglect

13123 East 16th Avenue, B390
Aurora, Colorado 80045
Kempe Center: 303-864-5250
Child Protection Team: 720-777-6919
IMHOFF Clinic: 303-864-5200
Kempe Center Fax: 303-864-5367 www.kempecenter.org/about.htm

Safer Society Foundation, Inc.

P.O. Box 340
Brandon, VT 05733-0340 USA
Phone: (802) 247-3132
Fax: (802) 247-4233
www.saferociety.org
(Also treatment referrals)

For Referral to a Treatment Provider for an Assessment**The Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA)**

4900 S.W. Griffith Drive, Suite 274
Beaverton, Oregon 97005, USA
Phone: (503) 643-1023
Fax: (503) 643-5084
www.atsa.com

Support for Congregants**Parents Anonymous**

250 West First Street, Suite 250
Claremont, CA 91711
Phone: (909) 621-6184
FAX: (909) 621-0614
1-800-339-6993

Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network | RAINN

National Sexual Assault Hotline is available 24/7: Telephone: 800-656-HOPE (4673)
www.rainn.org

Sexual Assault Recovery Anonymous

Lee Paiva
PO Box 401124
San Francisco, CA 94110
415 609 4484

Survivors of Incest Anonymous

info@nomeansnowworldwide.org
Phone: 410-877-1779
Address :
Survivors of Incest Anonymous
World Service Office
P.O. Box 190
Benson, MD 21018-9998
www.siawso.org

Insurance Issues**Church Mutual Insurance Company**

3000 Schuster Lane
PO Box 357
Merrill, WI 54452
800-554-2642
www.churchmutual.com

APPENDIX 10 INFORMATION ABOUT SEXUAL ABUSE

Please refer to [Balancing Acts by Reverend Debra Haffner](#) for references.

STOP IT NOW!! has a confidential toll-free hotline for assistance on what to do if you are concerned about potential abuse but are unsure how to proceed: 1-888-PREVENT. Stop It Now!! hotline staff will walk you through available options and what might be done to get help for everyone involved.

Possible Signs of an Adult Being an Abuser

Do you know an adult or older child who:

- Refuses to let a child set any of his or her own limits?
- Insists on hugging, touching, kissing, tickling, wrestling with or holding a child even when the child does not want this affection?
- Is overly interested in the sexuality of a particular child or teen (e.g., talks repeatedly about the child's developing body or interferes with normal teen dating)?
- Manages to get time alone or insists on time alone with a child with no interruptions?
- Spends most of his/her spare time with children and has little interest in spending time with someone their own age?
- Regularly offers to babysit many different children for free or takes children on overnight outings alone?
- Buys children expensive gifts or gives them money for no apparent reason?
- Frequently walks in on children/teens in the bathroom?
- Allows children or teens to consistently get away with inappropriate behaviors?

If you answered "yes" to some of these questions, talk to that person. If you are uncomfortable but don't see these signs, be sure to trust your instincts and ask questions. For information and advice on how to talk to someone, please call the Stop It Now!! Toll-Free Helpline at 1-888-PREVENT. *Reprinted with permission.*

If you answered "yes" to some of these questions, talk to the LRED. If you are uncomfortable but do not see these signs, be sure to trust your instincts and ask questions of the LRED or Safety Committee members. For more information, contact the Stop It Now!! Toll-free helpline at 1-888-PREVENT.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE, PEDOPHILIA AND SEX OFFENDERS

Childhood sexual abuse is a pervasive and devastating social problem. It is important as we consider these issues that we learn the facts about child sexual abuse, pedophilia, and sex offenders, and that we separate them from the myths that are held in the culture. The information in this section will provide the reader with a rudimentary understanding; readers are encouraged to contact the organizations listed in the Resources.

DEFINITION

One sex offender treatment specialist defined child sexual abuse as “a sexual act imposed upon a child who lacks emotional, maturational, and cognitive development. Authority and power enable the perpetrator, implicitly or directly, to coerce the child into sexual compliance. The ability to lure a child into a sexual relationship is based upon the all-powerful and dominant position of the adult or older adolescent perpetrator, which is in sharp contrast to the child's age, dependency, and subordinate position.” The abuse can be intrafamilial - between a child and a family member or person in the role of a family member - or extrafamilial - between a child and someone outside the family. Incest is a specific term for sexual contacts between persons who are prohibited from marrying by virtue of their familial relationship.

Sexual abusive behaviors range from nudity, disrobing, exhibitionism, to oral, anal, or vaginal sex.

Child sexual abuse can include:

- Touching a child's breasts, genitals, and anus.
- Having any type of intercourse with a child.
- Encouraging a child to watch or hear adult sexual acts.
- Using an object, instrument, or body part to penetrate a child's genitals or anus
- Having a child touch another's genitals.
- Using a child in erotica.
- Showing erotic or pornographic materials to a child.
- Photographing a child in sexual poses.

PREVALENCE

Sexual abuse of children is very common. According to a number of studies, between 17 and 25 percent of women report that they were sexually abused before the age of 18, and 10 and 15 percent of men were sexually abused before the age of 18. In a national study of adults aged 18 to 59, about 12 percent of the men and about 17% of the women reported that they had been sexually touched as children.

WHO IS ABUSED

The prevalence of childhood sexual abuse is remarkably high, and the facts often run counter to the assumptions that many people have. Both boys and girls are sexually abused, but abuses against girls predominate. Experience with childhood sexual abuse does not vary by ethnicity, race, social status, or education background of the parents.

- One in four girls and one in six boys will be sexually abused before they turn age 16.
- Children under the age of 12 account for half of the juvenile victims of forced sexual offenses.
- Young people under age 18 make up over two-thirds of all sex crime victims.
- Girls predominate as victims of sex offenses. 82% of all juvenile sex crime victims under the age of 18 are female.
- One of every seven victims of sexual assault reported to law enforcement agencies were under the age of six.

- Nearly five out of every six sexual assaults of juveniles occurred in someone's home, not a public place.
- Most children do not tell anyone the abuse has taken place. In a study of adults who remembered being touched sexually as a child, only one-quarter of the women and one in six of the men remembered that they had told someone about this sexual contact with an older person.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE OFFENDER TO THE VICTIM

Many people believe that children are sexually abused by strangers or known sex offenders. The reality is that strangers account for a small proportion of the abuse.

- Children know their abusers well in 90% of the cases – they are parents, family members, neighbors, clergy, coaches, and teachers.
- Family friends and relatives are the primary offenders; family friends are more likely to offend with boys and relatives to offend with girls. One in seven girls is abused by a father, stepfather, or mother's boyfriend, although only 3% of boys are abused by people in these categories.
- One-quarter of offenders of victims, ages 12 through 17 are family members.
- Only 7% of offenders of juveniles are strangers to their victims.

PROFILE OF THE OFFENDER

The public image of the sex offender is a strange middle-aged man lurking at a playground eyeing potential victims. The actual profile of the offender is someone well known to the child, someone who may be a teenager, and for boys, more likely to be female than another male. The percentage of adolescents that inappropriately touch children is rarely addressed in congregational policies or screening.

- Girls are primarily touched by men, while the boys are touched more often by women but also by men. The risk to girls is greatest from adult men (63%), followed by adolescent males (28%). The risk to boys is greatest from adolescent women (45%), followed by adolescent men (25%) and then older men (38%).
- Ninety-six percent of all offenders in sexual assaults of all ages reported to law enforcement agencies were male.
- Adults were the offenders in 60% of the sexual assaults of victims under the age of 12.
- Forty percent of the offenders of children under the age of six were other juveniles under the age of 18. Sixteen percent of juvenile offenders were under the age of twelve.
- Six percent of the offenders who sexually assaulted juveniles under the age of 18 were female, with 12% of the offenders with victims under six were female.

TREATMENT AND RECIDIVISM

As noted above, most sex crimes against children are never reported, and most sex offenders do not come to the attention of law authorities. Eighty-four percent of sexual abusers are never reported, and the National Crime Victimization Survey found that two-thirds of sexual assaults against persons 12 and older are not reported to law enforcement.

Nevertheless, since congregations need to know how to respond to people who have been convicted of sex offenses, this information is offered to clarify many of the myths around treatment and recidivism.

Although state laws and practices vary, in many states convicted sex offenders who are serving time in prisons are not granted parole until they have successfully completed a sex offender treatment program. In addition, once granted parole, states generally require the person as a condition of their parole to participate for a length of time in a treatment program for sex offenders. State laws do vary, and congregations will want to find out what treatment is available in their county jails and state prisons as well as parole requirements for treatment.