



JOHN CALVIN PRESBYTERY

Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Procedures

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SEE ALSO (Separate Document): TEMPLATE for Churches to use in writing their C/Y/VA Protection Policies

John Calvin Presbytery Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults (C-Y-VA) Protection Policy and Procedures

Policy Application Statement

It is the policy of the John Calvin Presbytery that all church members, officers, nonmember employees and/or contractors, and volunteers of congregations, councils, and entities of the church are to maintain the strongest sense of integrity, safety, nurturing, and care involving all interactions with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Accordingly, the following protection policy and procedures apply to all John Calvin Presbytery sponsored activities that involve children, youth, and vulnerable adults.

Purpose

Jesus said, “Whoever welcomes a child in my name welcomes me” (Matthew 18:5). The Presbyterian Church (USA) asks the whole congregation at the time of a child’s baptism if they promise to encourage and nurture the child into the faith of Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, the news has made us aware that church is not always a safe place for children, teenagers, and vulnerable adults in today’s world. Accordingly, the following policies and procedures are intended to address and implement the directives contained within the Presbyterian Church (USA)’s Book of Order relating to sexual misconduct policies as they impact youth, children and other vulnerable people, including but not limited to G-3.0106, “All councils shall adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy and a Child and Youth protection policy.” This policy is intended to be consistent with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and Procedures document that was approved by the 222nd General Assembly in 2016.

Monitoring and Oversight

This policy was adopted by John Calvin Presbytery on May 20, 2021 and will be followed by all those working with Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults. The Committee on Ministry will hold an annual review of this policy in order to determine if revisions or updates are needed.

It is the responsibility of the Presbytery to periodically consult with the insurance company through which we have coverage to make certain the policy covers liability issues for Paid Workers, Volunteers, and C-Y-VAs at all Presbytery-sponsored activities.

DEFINITIONS

Note: VA refers to Vulnerable Adults.

The following is a comprehensive list of definitions of terms and their intended use in this policy:

Abuse: For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions of abuse are taken from *Safe Sanctuaries* (Melton, 2008) which fall in line with those of the 2019-2021 Book of Order (2019). Abuse describes any act or failure to act that results in physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional mistreatment, neglect, or exploitation (Book of Order, 2019). Abuse may fall within any of the five (5) following areas plus item six (6) Misuse of Technology.

- 1. Physical Abuse:** When a person deliberately and intentionally causes bodily harm to a Child/Youth/VA. Examples may include violent battery with a weapon (knife, belt, strap, and so forth), burning, shaking, kicking, choking, fracturing bones, and any of a wide variety of non-accidental injuries (Melton, 2008, p. 30).

2. **Emotional Abuse:** When a person exposes a Child/Youth/VA to spoken and/or unspoken violence or emotional cruelty. Emotional abuse sends a message to the Child/Youth/VA of worthlessness, badness, and being not only unloved but undeserving of love and care. Emotional abuse is often difficult to prove and is devastating to the victim (Melton, 2008, p. 30).
3. **Neglect:** Abuse in which a person endangers a Child/Youth/VA's health, safety, or welfare through negligence. Neglect may include withholding food, clothing, medical care, education, and even affection and affirmation of self-worth (Melton, 2008, p. 30).
4. **Sexual Abuse:** Abuse in which sexual contact between a Child/Youth/VA and an adult (or another older and more powerful youth) occurs. The Child/Youth/VA is not able to consent or resist such contact and/or such sexual acts. Often the Child/Youth/VA is physically and psychologically dependent upon the perpetrator of the abuse. Examples may include fondling, intercourse, incest, and the exploitation of and exposure to child pornography or prostitution (Melton, 2008, p. 30).
5. **Ritual Abuse:** Abuse in which physical, sexual, or psychological violations of a child are inflicted regularly, intentionally, and in a stylized way by a person or persons responsible for the Child/Youth/VA's welfare. The abuser may appeal to some higher authority or power to justify the abuse. The abuse may include cruel treatment of animals or repeated threats of harm to the child, other persons, and animals (Melton, 2008, p. 30).
6. **Misuse of technology:** The use of technology that results in the harassing or abusing of a Child/Youth/VA. This includes using technology to send suggestive message and images to a Child/Youth/VA. Adults should not have any technological contact with a Child/Youth/VA that is not either pre-approved by the Child/Youth/VA's legal guardian with a signed waiver, or the contact is on an open public medium, such as a presbytery website or other social media program. (See Appendix H Code of Conduct for Workers and Volunteers. See Appendix I Covenant for Workers and Volunteers.)

Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult (C-Y-VA)

- A Child is a person between the ages of 0-11 years
- A Youth is a person between the ages of 12-17
- A Vulnerable Adult is a person with a disability who is 18 years or older without the developmental or cognitive capacity to consent. This includes individuals who have physical, emotional, or mental impairments who are unable to protect themselves. The definition also includes vulnerable individuals 60 and older when they are unable to protect their own interests or adequately perform or obtain services necessary to meet their essential human needs (Kansas Department for Children and Families [DCF] 2021; Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services [DHSS] 2021).

Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Volunteer (C-Y-VA Volunteer): Unpaid volunteers who are working with children, youth or vulnerable adults. Youth between the ages of 12 and 17 may volunteer, but they must only help with children and other youth who are at least four years younger. A qualified adult will supervise. Volunteers serving as chaperones must be at least 18, and drivers must be at least 25. Volunteers aged 18 or older are subject to a background check. (See Appendix A3 for a volunteer application.)

Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Worker – Paid Staff (C-Y-VA Worker): On-campus or off-campus paid staff or contractors participating in events or activities involving Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults. C-Y-VA Workers (paid staff) are required to be 18 years or older and at least four (4) years older than the oldest child or youth, being supervised. Paid staff aged 18 and older are subject to a background check. (See Appendix A C-Y-VA Paid Worker Application and Appendix A2 – Authorization for Criminal Background Check.)

John Calvin Presbytery: The legally-recognized entity of John Calvin Presbytery, a Kansas/Missouri non-profit organization, including any sub-entity such as a Presbytery or Council committee, commission, task force or other sub-entity appointed by or approved of by John Calvin Presbytery or the Presbytery Council to carry out the mission of the presbytery. References to John Calvin Presbytery do not generally include the actions of an individual church or its congregation unless the same is acting under the direction of the Presbytery for a particular activity or program. It is the expectation of John Calvin Presbytery that individual churches will adopt, abide by, and administer their own Child/Youth/VA Protection Policy and Procedures to be overseen by their own Sessions in conducting their own congregation-level or other local programs for Youth, Children and Vulnerable Adults.

Mandated Reporter: (As per Kansas and Missouri law) A requirement of any adult who is entrusted with responsibility or oversight of children, youth, or vulnerable adults to report to the appropriate state agency and any other persons required by the PCUSA's Book of Order if they have reasonable cause to suspect that one of these persons: 1.) has been subjected to abuse by staff or other participants; 2) is subjected to conditions and circumstances which would reasonably result in abuse; 3) discloses to staff or volunteers that prior abuse happened, outside the purview of the presbytery. See Appendix F for detailed information.

According to the *2019-2021 Book of Order*: "Any member of this church engaged in ordered ministry and any certified Christian educator employed by this church or its congregations, shall report to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities knowledge of harm, or the risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a Minor or an Adult who lacks mental capacity when (1) such information is gained outside of a confidential communication as defined in G-4.0301, (2) she or he is not bound by an obligation of privileged communication under law, or (3) she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of future physical harm or abuse" (2019, G-4.0302 *Mandatory Reporting*).

Protected Group: For the purposes of this policy, Protected Group refers to the category of Child or Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults (C-Y-VA).

Two-Adult Rule: The practice of C-Y-VA supervision in which one Adult should not be left alone one-on-one with a C-Y-VA. Even when two Adults are in the vicinity of an activity, as often as possible include at least two Adults in any small groups formed for activities, and where possible, at least one Adult of each gender.

Two-Adult Rule Floater: A Floater is an adult who acts as an assistant to an authority figure to monitor covered activities or events in order to comply with the two-adult rule when achieving such compliance by use of two non-related adults is unfeasible.

I. POSITION REQUIREMENTS FOR PAID WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS: APPLICATIONS, SCREENING, BACKGROUND CHECKS

A. Requirements for C-Y-VA Workers and Volunteers

1. Any prospective C-Y-VA Worker shall:

- a.** Be at least 18-years-old and four (4) years older than the oldest Youth whom they are serving.
- b.** Submit a signed application containing at least two (2) references from persons unrelated to the applicant, and consent to a background check to be obtained by this Presbytery and, if applicable, other sponsoring

councils. (See Appendix A for Application and Appendix A2 for Authorization Form for Criminal Background Check.)

c. Complete required training.

d. Sign a Conduct Covenant. (see Appendix I)

2. Any prospective Youth Volunteer shall:

a. Be at least 12 years old.

b. Submit a signed parental/guardian consent form to participate as a Youth Volunteer and, if 18 years or older, consent to a background check by this Presbytery, and if applicable, other sponsoring councils. (Due to the mandatory 4-year differential in age between a Child/Youth Volunteer and the Child/Youth being led, it is possible for a Youth Volunteer to be 18 years old or older, in which case the criminal background check is required). (See Appendix A-3 for Volunteer Application Form.)

c. Complete required training.

d. Sign a Covenant of Conduct (See Appendix I which may be modified for age-appropriate language.)

3. Any prospective Youth Camp Volunteer shall:

a. Be at least 16-years-old and two (2) years older than the oldest Youth whom they are serving.

b. Submit a signed application containing at least two (2) references from persons unrelated to the applicant, and, if 18 years or older, consent to a background check by this Presbytery and, if applicable, other sponsoring councils. Due to the mandatory 2- year differential in age between a Child/Youth Camp Volunteer and the Child/Youth being led, it is possible for a Youth Camp Volunteer to be 18 years old or older, in which case the criminal background check is required. (See Appendix A3 for a Volunteer Application Form.)

d. Sign a Covenant of Conduct (See Appendix I which may be modified for age-appropriate language.)

**B. Screening Rules and Procedures: Annual Background Checks for Paid Workers and Volunteers
This Presbytery shall:**

1. Periodically consult with the insurance company through which we have coverage to determine what background checks are appropriate for their particular event.

2. Obtain background checks for all C-Y-VA Workers and Adult Volunteers (aged 18 or older). Such checks shall be conducted annually, and within at least six months of the first event participated in during that 12-month period. (See Appendix A-2 for Authorization for and Request for a Criminal Background Check)

3. Screen for disqualifying Legal and Disciplinary Actions: No person may serve as a C-Y-VA Worker, Volunteer, or Youth Camp Volunteer who has a conviction (or is currently under charges) on his/her record of certain felonies or misdemeanors, including, but not limited to, any of the following:

a. Criminal homicide;

b. Aggravated assault;

c. Crimes related to the possession, use, or sale of drugs or controlled substances;

d. Sexual abuse;

e. Sexual assault;

f. Injury to a Minor;

g. Incest;

h. Indecency with a Minor;

i. Inducing sexual conduct or sexual performance of a Minor;

j. Possession or promotion of child pornography;

- k. The sale, distribution, or display of harmful material to a Minor;
- l. Employment harmful to Minor;
- m. Abandonment or endangerment of a Minor;
- n. Kidnapping or unlawful restraint;
- o. Public lewdness or indecent exposure and enticement of a Minor;
- p. Any crime that involves sexual misconduct or sexual abuse, particularly if it involves misconduct or abuse with a Minor;
- q. Any crime that involves misuse of technology for sexual purposes, such as collecting or distributing photographs of Minors who are naked or in sexual or inappropriate poses (Child pornography);
- r. Any crime that involves the use of force, such as assault or endangerment;
- s. Any crime that involves abduction and kidnapping;
- t. Any crime that involves drinking and driving, such as driving while intoxicated, within the preceding two (2) years. After two (2) years and completion of any court-ordered treatment and probationary terms, the individual may be a Child/Youth Worker but shall not drive participants. Five (5) years after the crime involving drinking and driving, provided the above conditions are satisfied and the individual has not been charged for any other similar offenses, the individual may be permitted to drive participants as a C-Y-VA Worker.
- u. Any matter pending before a Permanent Judicial Commission. If this Presbytery becomes aware that a C-Y-VA Worker or any Adult Volunteer has a prior conviction or is under charges for any of the offenses described above, he or she shall be immediately removed from such position and not be permitted to attend a Child/Youth/VA event except in a limited role as parent or guardian of a specific Child/Youth/VA.

II. ON-CAMPUS GENERAL RULES FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN/YOUTH/VULNERABLE ADULTS

The following rules and guidelines apply to any John Calvin Presbytery activity or event where Children, Youth or Vulnerable Adults are present, regardless of whether the event is being specifically offered as a Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult event or activity. Thus, these rules apply to Presbytery meetings and any other Presbytery-led activities when the Presbytery offers childcare or any activity available to Children, Youth, or Vulnerable Adults not in the continued presence of their parents or guardians.

Whenever Children, Youth, or Vulnerable Adults are present....

A. Check In/Out Procedures: All Children's programs will require a parent or other responsible Adult to check in/out each Child upon entering or leaving the program.

B. No Unsupervised Access: When any childcare or any activity is offered for C-Y-VAs during any Presbytery event, a sufficient number of Adults shall be assigned to supervise the same, in compliance with the Two-Adult Rule, so as to ensure that there is no unsupervised access to C-Y-VAs during the offered childcare or other activity.

C. Two-Adult Rule: Presbytery activities and events at which it is reasonably anticipated that Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults may be present shall be planned in a manner that enables two unrelated Adults to be present at all times where there are Children, Youth, or Vulnerable Adults.

1. If it is not possible to have two Adults within the same room or immediate space, there shall be a Floater Adult in the vicinity who is able to freely check on activities.

2. When a Floater Adult is not immediately available, other precautions shall be taken, including
 - a. ensuring the door to the room in which a Child/Youth/VA is present remains open,
 - b. ensuring additional Children are present so that no Child is alone with just one Adult, and
 - c. ensuring the period during which two Adults are not present (or one Adult and a Floater Adult) is temporary and not predictable or routine.

D. Ratios: The ratio of Adults to participating Children and Youth for any John Calvin Presbytery activity or event, including the provision of childcare services, shall be 2:8 for infants and toddlers (birth - age 2), 2:10 ratio for Children (3 - 11 years), and 2:12 ratio for Youth (12 - 17 years old). Additionally, there should be one Adult of each gender when there is one or more minors in a group. Only in an unexpected or emergency situation may the ratios be compromised. Caretakers of Vulnerable Adults should be consulted to determine Staff-to-VA ratios appropriate for the developmental abilities of the individual Vulnerable Adults involved, but ratios should always be at least 1 Staff to 5 Vulnerable Adults and include both genders.

E. Open Access to Rooms: All rooms where C-Y-VAs meet should have windows to the hallway, windows in the doors or Dutch doors. If this requirement cannot be accommodated, then the doors to the room must be left open at all times.

F. Supervision to be Maintained: No C-Y-VA shall be permitted to walk alone or to walk away from a group so as to be alone or in a place where the Two-Adult Rule cannot be followed.

G. Privacy Protection: Adult workers should respect the privacy of the C-Y-VAs with whom they are entrusted. Responsible use of digital devices and cell phones is required in all situations, *e.g.*, not taking inappropriate photographs or videos. Any photographs or videos taken should be for group use only and not shared on social media without parental/guardian permission. (See Appendix K Authorization Form for Photo and Video Use.)

H. Guidelines for Use of Restrooms

The Two- Adult Rule applies in all circumstances; the following guidelines pertain to the supervision expected to be maintained when C-Y-VAs need to use the restroom.

1. Caretakers of each Vulnerable Adult should be consulted to determine the restroom assistance needed, with staff's response being respectful and focused on fostering independence.
2. Diaper changes should be performed by Adult staff only and otherwise in compliance with the Two- Adult Rule.
3. Scheduled restroom breaks should be planned for preschool and elementary age Children when possible so that groups of Children are going to the restroom at the same time. The attending Adult should wait outside the restroom.
4. If just one Child must go to the restroom, one Adult should escort the Child and, if possible, prop the outside door open. The Adult should remain outside the door and wait to escort the Child back to the classroom. In accordance with the Two-Adult Rule, a second Adult should remain with the other Children in the classroom with the classroom door open. A Floater Adult may assist in this process.
5. Adults should not be alone with a Child in an unsupervised restroom.

I. One-to-One Mentoring: Any one-to-one mentoring or counseling of a Child/Youth/VA shall be conducted within line of sight of another Adult.

J. Guidelines for Physical Interactions: Refer to Appendix H: Code of Conduct for guidelines on general prohibitions, specific interaction standards, appropriate verbal interactions, appropriate out-of-program contact, and one-on-one interaction guidelines.

K. Guidelines for Disciplining Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults

Sometimes Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults require instruction and some form of discipline regarding their own behavior. However, all such instruction and action should be constructive and done in a loving manner that keeps their safety and best interests in mind. The following guidelines should be followed in the implementation of any discipline for Children, Youth or Vulnerable Adults:

1. Caretakers of each Vulnerable Adult should be consulted to determine an appropriate plan.
2. Remind Children, Youth or Vulnerable Adults of proper group behavior and group guidelines. Expectations should be made very clear. (See Appendix J for Child/Youth/VA Code of Conduct).
3. All discipline should be assertive and positive and done in love. Immediate praise and recognition for positive actions are effective ways to encourage more of the same. It is often more effective to reward good behavior than to punish bad behavior.
4. The practice of “redirecting” is the preferred method of correcting unwanted behavior. A Child, Youth or Vulnerable Adult may be moved to a different situation or area. Separate the Child/Youth/VA from others if he/she is having difficulty making good choices. When the Child, Youth or Vulnerable Adult is settled, have him/her rejoin the group.
5. In the event of chronic, unwanted behaviors, the Group or Program Leader should be contacted.
6. **Inappropriate discipline** includes but is not limited to: corporal punishment of any kind, derogatory sarcasm, put downs or any kind of verbal attack including yelling or screaming at a Child, Youth or Vulnerable Adult. (See Appendix H for a Code of Conduct for Child/Youth/VA Workers and Volunteers.)

III. OFF-CAMPUS GENERAL EVENT RULES FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN/YOUTH/ VULNERABLE ADULTS

Additional requirements apply to off-campus events involving children, youth, and vulnerable adults to include but not limited to mission trips, service trips, camps, and retreats.

A. Permission Forms and Medical Release Forms: Permission slips and medical release forms should be completed and signed for each Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult by the parent/guardian prior to the event. These forms should include: Parents’ contact information; emergency contact information; allergies or medical conditions and restrictions; health insurance information. All forms should be stored at the event site, in a secure place with restricted access. (See Appendix D for a sample Permission/Medical Release Form.)

B. Transportation Provided During Events:

1. Drivers must be age 25 or older and must comply with the guidelines in Appendix B.
2. The same general Adult/Child or Adult/Youth ratios applicable to Children/Youth/VA events shall be maintained during transportation within the safe loading limits of all vehicles being used: i.e., a 2:8 ratio for infants and toddlers (birth – age 2); a 2:10 ratio for Children (3 – 11 years) and a 2:12 ratio for Youth (12 – 17 years old).
3. All passengers must remain seated and use seat belts anytime the vehicle is moving.

4. All drivers must comply with the guidelines set in Appendix B: Application for Volunteer Driver. It is recommended that on trips of more than four (4) hours, there be at least two drivers per vehicle, or at least enough drivers to provide rest periods for each driver.
5. If a charter bus is rented, or any outside carrier is contracted, the company hired must ensure that their drivers have passed criminal background checks.
6. Any driver operating a vehicle which holds 16 passengers or more, including the driver, shall possess a valid Commercial Driver License (CDL).
7. Each Child/Youth/VA and the parent/guardian should be provided phone numbers that will enable them to contact the Child/Youth/VA Workers at any time, in case of emergency.
8. Each Child/Youth/VA Worker who may be permitted to drive Children or Youth shall be over the age of 25, have completed an Application and provided a copy of their valid driver's license and verification of holding current automobile insurance. Such persons should be listed on a Presbytery-maintained list of approved drivers kept by the Stated Clerk. (See Appendix B Application for Volunteer Driver and Appendix C List of Approved Drivers.)

C. Housing:

1. Children/Youth/VAs should room with Children/Youth/VAs of the same age range and gender.
2. Children/Youth/VAs and Adults may only room in the same room if it is "dormitory" style and there are two unrelated Adults in the room.
3. Children/Youth/VAs should never sleep alone in a room with an Adult unless that Adult is a parent or guardian of that Child/Youth/VA.
4. There should be a process in place for nightly check-in and assurance that all Children/Youth/VAs are in their assigned rooms for the night.
5. Where Children/Youth/VAs and Adults share bathroom facilities, different showering/grooming times should be maintained to ensure separation and privacy. These hours should be posted in an accessible location for all.

D. First Aid Training: For all off-campus events at least one supervising adult should be certified in first aid and CPR.

E. Training on Expectations for Behavior of Participating Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults: Age-appropriate training for Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults and their parents should be provided to communicate clear expectations for their behavior during on-campus or off-campus Presbytery-sponsored activities.

F. A Behavior Covenant may be provided to and signed by all Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults and their parents/guardians. The covenant may include acceptable behavior, social networking guidelines or restrictions, respect for Adults, and adherence to the event's schedule. (See Appendix J Code of Conduct.)

IV. SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS RULES & PROCEDURES

A. Official and Official-Sounding Communications:

1. No person (including employees, contractors, volunteers or clergy members of this Presbytery) shall create or use a media site (Web, Facebook, YouTube, or similar) in the name of, or purporting to represent, the John

Calvin Presbytery (or a particular event or activity sponsored by this Presbytery) without the explicit written permission of the responsible designee to oversee electronic communication.

2. Persons acting in their capacity as representatives of this Presbytery to lead or coordinate a group activity may be given permission to use social media relating to the event; in such cases, each may use only official methods approved by this presbytery which may include Web pages, Facebook, e-mail, and similar means.

B. General Requirements Relating to Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults and Social Media:

The following general guidelines pertain to all social media posting and communications regarding or directed to Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults:

1. A Child's/Youth's name shall not be published on a media site without explicit written permission of the parent/guardian. (See Appendix K for Authorization Form for Photo and Video Use.) The permission form will be kept on file in the Presbytery office.)
2. All communication sent digitally is not confidential and must be available to be shared with or reposted by others.
3. Interactions in the virtual world need to be transparent and compliant with the boundaries and principles reflected by these policies overall.
4. Prudent judgment shall be used any time Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults are contacted through social media. Matters that may be of a personal nature should not be discussed or displayed, and heightened sensitivity should always be used. Laws regarding mandated reporting of suspected abuse/neglect/exploitation of Children, Youth, elders, and Vulnerable Adults apply in the virtual world. (See Appendix H Code of Conduct.)
5. When possible, communication (including images) shall be sent to entire groups or posted in public social media space, not in private messages.

C. Duty to Monitor:

Persons who shall create public pages on behalf of this Presbytery or its programs are responsible for monitoring communications (including any following an initial post) and for ensuring that no persons have: (a) private conversations through the site or (b) public conversations which may be perceived as inappropriate with C-Y-VAs. Accordingly, any "reply posts" or other communications that can be detected and are felt to be of possibly inappropriate nature should be deleted or removed.

D. Prohibited Conduct: (See Appendix H Code of Conduct.)

The following social networking conduct shall be prohibited and any postings or other content reflecting the same shall be deleted or removed promptly:

1. Content that is or could be interpreted by any observer to be harsh, coercive, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning or humiliating toward a Child, Youth or Vulnerable Adult;
2. Content that references or depicts any sexually oriented activity;
3. Content that references or reveals communications with or about a Child/Youth/VA which are reasonably expected to be private.

E. Reporting Inappropriate Communication

Anyone viewing a possibly inappropriate communication may report the same to the designated John Calvin Presbytery authority, and the communication should be promptly reviewed for removal.

F. Initiation of Social Media Contacts: (See Appendix H Code of Conduct.)

1. C-Y-VAs may not be in a position to decline the initiation of social media contact requests due to the disparity of power between them and Adults. Therefore, C-Y-VA Workers and Volunteers (both youth and adults, including camp staff) should not submit “friend” or “follow” requests to C-Y-VAs without prior consent from the C-Y-VAs’ parents/guardians.

2. C-Y-VAs may take the initiative and request to be “friends” with C-Y-VA Workers and Volunteers (both youth and adults, including camp staff). These requests may be accepted provided the C-Y-VA Workers and Volunteers first communicate with the C-Y-VA’s parent(s)/guardian(s) and receive their approval. Parents/Guardians must be able to gain full access to all aspects of that person’s profile and correspondence. In responding to such a request, C-Y-VA Workers and Volunteers should carefully discern the level of contact they want to maintain with Youth prior to responding to these requests.

G. Education: (See Appendix H Code of Conduct.)

A description of these rules on the use of social media and what is or is not appropriate communication using social media shall be provided to Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults who may be invited to read or react to such social media, as well as made available to their parents/guardians. Children and Youth should be reminded how to appropriately interact through any social networking site and adhere to any applicable social networking code of conduct. Parents/guardians should periodically also be encouraged to monitor the social media and networking sites.

H. Violations:

If a C-Y-VA reveals abuse or inappropriate interactions through social media with a C-Y-VA Worker or Volunteer, or any other Adult or staff, this shall be treated as any other abuse situation as outlined in this policy. In addition to a violator being denied further access to the site based on inappropriate content, additional disciplinary action may be appropriate under this policy.

V. REPORTING RULES & PROCEDURES

Reporting Procedures: These procedures are to be followed when reporting any activity suspected of violating John Calvin Presbytery’s C-Y-VA Protection Policy. (See Appendix E Incident Report Form. See Appendix F Mandated Reporting.)

The process for reporting incidents involving Children and Youth differs slightly from the process for reporting incidents involving Vulnerable Adults as noted in Appendix F Mandated Reporting in Kansas and Missouri.

A. Initial Reporting: Anyone who experiences, sees, or hears of activity that may violate this policy shall be encouraged to report their information at any time during or after the event to any C-Y-VA Worker or other

authorized contact person of the John Calvin Presbytery sponsored event. Even if such information is learned from another (i.e., it is hearsay) it should still be reported. Reports may be made orally or in writing. While a written form may be offered as a convenience, no particular written report shall be required to constitute an actionable report.

B. Notification of Reporting Procedures: When sponsoring any C-Y-VA event, John Calvin Presbytery will:

1. Publicize in writing the procedures for reporting any activity suspected of violating this Policy. The written notification shall include contact information for all C-Y-VA Workers who are authorized to be present during the reporting event (each of whom is an authorized contact person for purposes of a possible victim making a report), including but not limited to those who have been specifically designated for heightened responsibilities under this Policy such as being a designated leader of this presbytery or another sponsoring entity. The written procedure shall indicate who has these additional designated responsibilities.

who has these additional designated responsibilities.

2. The procedures for making a report shall also be provided in an age-appropriate manner to all C-Y-VAs attending the event, as well as to all leaders.

3. A copy of that notification shall be made available at all times in a public place at the event.

Where the Child/Youth/VA event will involve out-of-town travel and/or overnight accommodations, the procedures for reporting any suspected violation will also be provided verbally to all attending Children and Youth early in the event, such as during the orientation.

C. Initial Response Procedures: All reports of suspected violations shall be given immediate attention by the Event Leader(s) and others authorized to receive such information. Upon receiving any report of activity which may violate this Policy (whether or not in writing), a C-Y-VA Worker or other authorized contact person shall, after ensuring any C-Y-VA who is the alleged victim is safe, immediately share such information with the event leader (pastor, session member, event leader, etc.). Contact shall also be promptly made with the parents or guardian of the C-Y-VA. Once the safety of the alleged victim of any suspected conduct is assured, event leader(s) will obtain a written Incident Report for, or on behalf of, the alleged victim. (See Appendix E for Incident Report Form.) It should be noted that the formalizing of such a report into written form is not a prerequisite to any governmental reporting responsibility.

D. Mandated Reporting – Governmental Reporting: All C-Y-VA Workers shall be made aware that state law requires the immediate reporting of any incident that gives rise to reasonable cause to suspect that a Child/Youth/VA has been or may be subjected to abuse or neglect or any observation of them being subjected to conditions or circumstances which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect. Such reports are to be made to the State’s Child Abuse Hotline and the failure to do so promptly (i.e., within less than 24 hours of receipt of such information) may be a violation of state law, for which any persons who were required to make the report could be liable. Any C-Y-VA Worker who believes they have received information meeting the governmental reporting standard is required to contact the appropriate Adult Leader for assistance in making a governmental report. (See Appendix F Mandated Reporting in Kansas and Missouri.)

VI. CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

Records relating to C-Y-VA Worker applications, background checks, reports of possible violations of this Policy and the investigation or response thereto, and other records relating to the John Calvin Presbytery’s C-Y-

VA Protection Rules and Procedures shall be created, used and retained as confidential records as further described below:

A. Background Checks: Applications for background checks on C-Y-VA Workers shall be made only by a designated employee(s) or an officer of the Presbytery. The designated employee(s) or officer may communicate with the sponsoring entity whether the background information obtained disqualifies an individual from the role of C-Y-VA worker (or a driver for a C-Y-VA event) but shall provide no further details without the written consent of the individual to whom the background information pertains. All papers and communications regarding applications and results of background checks (and related communications) shall be maintained in the Presbytery office. Such materials shall be stored in a locked file cabinet or password protected electronic storage to which access is limited to the designated Presbytery employee(s) or officer. Materials relating to background checks shall be retained for at least ten (10) years and shall not be destroyed without consultation with any sub-entity generally responsible for planning C-Y-VA events, which may advise of any ongoing relevance supporting further retention.

B. Violation Reports and Response Records: All documents and communications reflecting or relating to the report of a violation (or possible violation) of this Presbytery's C-Y-VA Protection Rules and Procedures shall be retained in the Presbytery office in a confidential manner. The work of any Child/Youth Safety Response Team, any commission or other persons investigating or responding to a violation report shall be, to the extent practicable, preserved and retained in the Presbytery office following completion of its work. At a minimum, the identity of any persons involved in the investigation and/or response, a summary of the work done, any documents or communications they received from third parties, and a report of any conclusions reached by the commission shall be retained by the Presbytery. All records pertaining to violation reports and investigations or responses (and related communications) shall be maintained in the Presbytery office. Such materials shall be stored in a locked file cabinet or password protected electronic storage to which access is limited to the designated Presbytery employee(s) or officer. Materials relating to reports of violation and investigation or response shall be retained at least ten (10) years and shall not then be destroyed without consultation with legal counsel as to which, if any materials, may be destroyed.

C. Other information related to the implementation and enforcement of the John Calvin Presbytery's C-Y-VA Protection Rules and Procedures: The Presbytery office shall maintain all other documents and communications created or received in connection with the implementation and enforcement of this Policy in confidential, secured files (locked file cabinets or electronic storage) to which access is limited to designated Presbytery employee(s) or officer(s). Such other materials relating to the implementation and enforcement shall be retained at least five (5) years.

D. Destruction of Confidential Records: In the event any materials described by this section are to be destroyed, such destruction shall include shredding, incineration or other method of destruction that ensures complete destruction of the specified records.

VII. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL CHILD-YOUTH-VULNERABLE ADULT WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS

Each Adult Worker and all volunteers shall attend a training session before being allowed to work with Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults. While this policy contains the information for a training session, there are outside sources that can be contracted for trainings. Either way, trainings are required to cover all the basic steps below. (See Appendix L for a more complete Training Model.)

Trainings for Child/Youth/VA Workers shall cover, but are not limited to:

- A.** An overview of this policy – the John Calvin Presbytery C-Y-VA Protection Rules and Procedures. Point out the Definition of Terms at the first of the policy.
- B.** Discussion of appropriate boundaries with C-Y-VAs and what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate interaction, the Two Adult Rule, Adult/Child/Youth/VA ratios, transportation rules, use of technology, and other rules applicable to Child/Youth/VA Workers and Volunteers. (See Appendix H Code of Conduct for Workers and Volunteers.)
- C.** How to recognize signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. (See Appendix G Signs and Indications of Abuse.)
- D.** Laws concerning reporting requirements for Kansas and Missouri (See Appendix F Mandated Reporting in Kansas and Missouri.)
- E.** An explanation of the requirement of criminal background checks and confidentiality requirements regarding those files. (See page 4 titled Screening Rules and Procedures: Background Checks. See also Appendix A-2 for Authorization for and Request for a Criminal Background Check.)
- F.** An explanation and discussion of the importance of the application and screening processes for selection of Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Workers and Volunteers. (See Application Appendices A, A1, A2, A3, B.)
- G.** Identification of who is authorized to speak with the press in case of an incident.
- H.** If an overnight event is planned, discussions of boundaries involving appropriate sleeping arrangements and use of restroom/shower facilities. (See Section III Off-Campus General Event Rules on pages 7-8.)
- I.** A discussion on how to identify first aid supplies/practices for all events. This should include the identification of staff/volunteers who are certified in first aid and CPR.
- J.** A review of Appendix J titled C-Y-VA Code of Conduct and Pledge.
- K.** A review of Appendix H Code of Conduct for a C-Y-VA Worker/Volunteer.
- L.** A review of Appendix I Signed Covenant for a C-Y-VA Worker/Volunteer. Each trainee will sign and retain a copy of the signed Covenant, and a copy will be kept on file by the Presbytery.

APPENDIX A
CHILD /YOUTH/VULNERABLE ADULT WORKER (PAID STAFF) APPLICATION
 For use by all who seek a paid staff position that will involve the supervision and/or custody of
 Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults

Applicant Information:

Full Name (first, last, middle) _____

Are you over the age of 18: Yes No Date of Birth: _____

Present address (city, state, zip code): _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

For what position are you applying: _____ Date available to start: _____

If there is a date by which you need to end your position, any known "vacation" dates you will need to be absent, or any other limitations on your availability, please describe below:

Education

List any academic degrees and certifications you have received:

School Attended	Date of Completion/Graduation	Degree/Certification

School Attended	Date of Completion/Graduation	Degree/Certification

List any professional organizations in which you are a member:

Work Experience: Describe each employment experience you have had in the past 5 years:

1. _____

Most Recent Employer	Address/Phone	
	Supervisor's Name	Date Began/Ended

Position(s) Describe responsibilities:

2. _____

Employer	Address/Phone	
	Supervisor's Name	Date Began/Ended

Position(s) Describe Responsibilities:

Volunteer Experience: Describe any relevant volunteer work you have performed in the past five years.

1. (Most Recent) _____

Organization	Address/Phone

Length of Time Known: _____ Relationship to Reference: _____

2.Name: _____ Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Other Phone: _____

Length of Time Known: _____ Relationship to Reference: _____

3.Name: _____ Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Other Phone: _____

Length of Time Known: _____ Relationship to Reference: _____

*****Please also complete Appendix A2 Authorization Form and Request for Criminal Background Check.*****

**ATTESTATION OF ACCURACY, AUTHORIZATION TO CONTACT
REFERENCES/EMPLOYERS/SUPERVISORS, LIMITED WAIVER OF CONFIDENTIALITY AND
AGREEMENT TO ABIDE BY POLICIES**

All persons employed as paid staff for John Calvin Presbytery are required: a) to submit to a criminal records background check; b) to consent to all references and employers and prior supervisors being contacted; and c) to authorize any such persons to provide any information they may have regarding the applicant's character and fitness for the position(s). To indicate your agreement to these terms, please review and sign below.

I _____, attest that I am familiar with the information I have provided on this application and that it is true and correct. I authorize the John Calvin Presbytery and any affiliated organization working with it in connection with the position(s) for which I am applying, to verify the information I have provided by contacting the references, employers and supervisors I have listed and any other persons who may have information pertaining to my employment and other relevant experience. I further authorize all such persons contacted to provide whatever information they have regarding my experience, character and fitness for the position(s) I have applied for, and I waive any claim to confidentiality of any such information for this limited purpose. In the event my application is accepted and I am employed by John Calvin Presbytery, I agree to abide by and be bound by their policies and to refrain from inappropriate conduct in the performance of my duties. As separately completing Appendix A-2, I further authorize the conducting of a criminal background check. I have read the above Attestation, Authorization, Limited Waiver and Agreement and indicate my acceptance of the same freely and under no duress or coercion by my signature below.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix A-1
REFERENCE FORM

For use by the John Calvin Presbytery when contacting references for potential paid employees

Each reference provided with regard to an employee application for C-Y-VA Worker position shall be asked to provide the following information by either completing and returning this form to John Calvin Presbytery or by providing answers to the following questions through telephone, email or other methods.

Applicant Name: _____

Reference Information: Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Other Phone: _____ Length of time you have known the

Applicant: _____ How well do you know the Applicant? _____

1. Describe how you have worked with or interacted with the Applicant over the time you have known her/him:

2. How would you describe the Applicant's ability to work with and relate to children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults?

3. How would you describe the Applicant's leadership ability?

4. How would you feel about having the Applicant as a volunteer or paid worker with your child, youth or vulnerable adult?

5. Do you know of any characteristics or experiences that may negatively affect the Applicant's ability to work with Children, Youth, or Vulnerable Adults? If yes, please describe:

6. Do you have any knowledge that the Applicant has ever been convicted of a crime? If so, please describe.

7. Please provide any other comments regarding the Applicant:

Reference provided by: _____ Date: _____

Please return this form to:

If you have any questions, please contact John Calvin Presbytery at: _____

Appendix A-2
AUTHORIZATION FOR & REQUEST FOR CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

I, _____, hereby authorize John Calvin Presbytery to request the appropriate sheriff's/police department or other law enforcement office to release information regarding any records or charges contained in its files, or in any other criminal file maintained on me, whether said file pertains to local, state or national offenses, and including but not limited to accusations as well as convictions for offenses committed against minors, to the fullest extent permitted by state and federal law. I do release said sheriff's/police department or other law enforcement office from all liability that might result from any such disclosure made in response to this request. I specifically authorize the searching for such information through any databases maintained by or for law enforcement personnel by anyone authorized by law to conduct such searches.

Signature Date

Print your full name: _____

Print any other names you have used (e.g., maiden names or nicknames):

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth: _____

Social Security Number: _____

Driver's License Number: _____

State Issuing License: _____ License Expiration Date: _____

Appendix A3
VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN/YOUTH/VULNERABLE ADULTS

Note: Volunteers 18 years and older must also complete and attach Appendix A2 Criminal Background Check Authorization

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Numbers: 1. _____ 2. _____

Occupation: _____

Employer: _____

Current job responsibilities and work schedule: _____

Previous Work Experience: _____

Previous Volunteer Experience: _____

Special Interests, hobbies, and skills: _____

How many hours per week are you available to volunteer? _____

_____ Days _____ Evenings _____ Weekends

Can you make a one-year commitment to this volunteer role? _____

Do you have your own transportation? _____

Do you have a valid driver's license? _____

Do you have liability insurance? (List policy limits and name of carrier) _____

What qualities do you have that would help you work with Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults? _____

Would you be available for periodic volunteer training sessions? _____ Yes _____ No

Please list three personal references (persons who are not related to you by blood or marriage) and provide complete address and phone information for each. References are confidential

1. Name
Address
Phone number(s)
Relationship to reference:

2. Name
Address
Phone number(s)
Relationship to reference:

3. Name
Address
Phone number(s)
Relationship to reference:

Waiver and Consent:

I, _____, hereby certify that the information I have provided on this application for volunteer work placement is true and correct. I authorize this Presbytery to verify the information I have provided on this application by contacting the references I have listed, by conducting a criminal background check, or by other means, including contacting others whom I have not listed. I authorize the references and others contacted by the Presbytery to give you whatever information they may have regarding my character and fitness for the volunteer position for which I have applied. Furthermore, I waive any rights I may have to confidentiality.

In the event that my application is accepted and I begin to work in a volunteer role at John Calvin Presbytery, I agree to abide by and be bound by the policies of, and to refrain from inappropriate conduct in the performance of my duties on behalf of John Calvin Presbytery.

I have read this waiver and the entire application, and I am fully aware of its contents. I sign this consent freely and under no duress or coercion.

Signature of Applicant Date

Signature of Parent for Volunteer Applicants Younger than eighteen (18)

Appendix B
APPLICATION FOR VOLUNTEER DRIVER
Qualification Form & Agreement for Use of Personally Owned Vehicles

Note: Drivers must be aged 25 or older.

Name: _____ Birth Date: _____

Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Years of driving experience _____ Driver's License No. & State*: _____

Expiration Date: _____ Insurance Carrier _____ Policy Expiration Date: _____

Policy Number _____

Liability Policy Limit – Bodily Injury _____ Property Damage: _____

1. Are all licensed vehicles you own covered by insurance as required by law? Yes No

2. Have you ever been denied a driver's license or had one suspended or revoked? Yes No

If yes, explain:

3. Have you had any moving traffic violations or accidents in the past three years? Yes No

If yes, explain:

Give dates and details of violations and accidents on the back of this form.

I AGREE to the following terms as a condition of being permitted to act as a Volunteer Driver for John Calvin Presbytery:

1. The vehicle owner's insurance is the primary liability insurance coverage in the event of an accident.

2. The owner of the vehicle which I am driving is responsible for keeping the vehicle in safe working order.

3. The owner of the vehicle is responsible for all damage to the vehicle however caused.

4. The owner of the vehicle shall maintain liability insurance in the amount of at least

A) Bodily Injury -- \$50,000 per person and \$100,000 per accident or \$200,000 combined single limit; and

B) Property Damage -- \$25,000 per accident

5. The Presbytery's insurance shall apply in excess of the vehicle owner's liability insurance limits in the event the primary limits are exhausted, and only to the extent the Presbytery is legally obligated to pay damages.

6. I will not receive or initiate phone calls while operating a vehicle for John Calvin Presbytery activities, nor initiate or respond to text messages.

7. I will indemnify and hold John Calvin Presbytery harmless from liabilities and damage resulting from my operation of a motor vehicle not owned by the Presbytery. The Presbytery will indemnify and hold harmless the volunteer driver for liabilities and damages resulting from acts or negligence of the Presbytery.

8. I have submitted my consent for a background check. I hereby AFFIRM that the information I have given is stated truthfully.

Please Attach a copy of Driver's License and a current Insurance ID Card

Driver Signature: _____ Date: _____

Approved: _____ Date: _____ Expiration: _____

Note: Any person serving as a volunteer driver must be 25 years or older and must submit to a criminal background check (see Appendix A2) prior to approval to provide such service.

Appendix C
APPROVED ADULT LEADERSHIP/DRIVERS FOR
CHILD-YOUTH-VULNERABLE ADULT EVENTS
Paid Staff or Volunteers

The individuals listed on this form have acknowledged receiving and reading John Calvin Presbytery's C-Y-VA Protection Rules and Procedures. They have been through the policy training, and were screened through a review of their application and a criminal background check.

Therefore, the following individuals are authorized to work as Child/Youth/VA Workers (paid employees or volunteers), and if indicated, to drive the Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults of this Presbytery for 12 months from the below date.

Date _____ 20_____

Signature: _____ Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____ Printed Name: _____

Position: _____ Position: _____

Name	Authorized to Drive	
1. _____	Yes	No
2. _____	Yes	No
3. _____	Yes	No
4. _____	Yes	No
5. _____	Yes	No
6. _____	Yes	No
7. _____	Yes	No
8. _____	Yes	No
9. _____	Yes	No
10. _____	Yes	No

Appendix D
PERMISSION SLIP AND MEDICAL RELEASE FORM
FOR CHILD-YOUTH-VULNERABLE ADULTS

_____ has my permission to go with John Calvin Presbytery to
Name _____

_____ on _____
Destination Date

I understand that transportation will be provided John Calvin Presbytery in vehicles driven by approved Adult drivers.

In the event of an emergency, I give permission for the Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Workers to secure necessary medical treatment for my Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult by qualified and licensed medical personnel. I understand that efforts will be made to contact me at the numbers below before any medical procedure is performed. I also release _____ Presbyterian Church and its Workers and Volunteers for this event from all liability, actual or potential, which may arise from accidental injury to my Child /Youth / Vulnerable Adult.

Parent or Guardian _____
Printed Name Signature

Address: _____ Home Church: _____

Emergency Contacts and Phone numbers:

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Please list any friends the participant may be coming with: _____

Medical Information:

What medication(s) is your Child/Youth/VA currently taking that chaperones need to be aware of?

If there are any regular dosing instructions, please describe them below:

What allergies does your Child/Youth/VA have that chaperones need to be aware of (food, medications, others)? _____

Date of last Tetanus shot/booster: _____

Is there anything else we should know about your Child/Youth/VA to provide assistance in the event of an accident or emergency? _____

Insurance Information:

Policy Holder Name: _____ Insurance Company: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Policy Number: _____ Group Number: _____

Physician Information:

Participant Primary Physician: _____

Physician Contact Information: _____

Appendix E
INCIDENT REPORT FORM FOR JOHN CALVIN PRESBYTERY

*VA refers to Vulnerable Adult

Date of the Report: _____

Reason for Report: _____

Date of the Incident _____ Time: _____ Sponsoring Entity(s) _____

Location of Event _____

Name of Reporter _____ Title _____

Names of Child/Youth/VA* _____ Age _____

Quote the Child/Youth/VA's first words verbatim:

Briefly describe the child/Youth/VA's demeanor or appearance:

Briefly describe what happened:

What action did you take?

Has the incident been resolved? _____ Yes _____ No _____ Explain: _____

Injury requires physician visit? Yes _____ No _____ Name of Physician/Hospital: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number _____ What medical attention was desired or required? _____

Names of Witnesses: _____ Signatures of Witnesses (if Possible): _____

Signature of Injured Party _____ Date: _____

Signature of Staff Member Making this Report: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Person Accepting this Report: _____ Date: _____

Appendix F Mandated Reporting for Kansas and Missouri

John Calvin Presbytery affirms that all children, youth, and vulnerable adults have the right to live in safety. Therefore, the Presbytery is determined to provide an environment in which these persons are safe from neglect or abuse.

Under the law in both Missouri and Kansas, anyone who is entrusted with responsibility or oversight of children, youth, or vulnerable adults is required to place a governmental report to the appropriate state agency if they **have reasonable cause to suspect** that one of these persons:

- was subjected to abuse by staff or other participants.
- was subjected to conditions and circumstances which would reasonably result in abuse.
- has disclosed that prior abuse happened.

A report shall be made immediately to the respective state agency as detailed below. Staff/volunteers are not to undertake any investigation nor ask leading questions in advance of making this report. (Report does not have to prove abuse/neglect; the call enables the appropriate authorities to take the next steps.)

No other procedure, such as informing a staff person or supervisor, takes the place of this reporting. Reports may not be made anonymously but confidentiality is maintained. No person making such a report shall be subject to any adverse effects of any kind, from any source. Failure to report is criminal and also exposes the Presbytery to civil liability claims.

All volunteers are encouraged to learn more about Mandated Reporting by going to <http://protectmokids.com> as well as both websites listed below.

In Missouri:

Reporting for children

Hotline 800-392-3738 or
<http://dss.mo.gov/cd/can.htm>

Reporting for vulnerable adults:

Hotline 800-392-210 or
<http://health.mo.gov/safety/abuse>

In Kansas

Reporting for both children and adults

Hotline 800-922-5330
www.dcf.ks.gov
select Report Abuse, then
Mandated Reporter

Contents of a Report of Abuse/Neglect

A person who reports suspected maltreatment will be asked to supply as much of the following information as possible. (In making a report, don't make assumptions regarding answers; do not offer guesses. It is always appropriate to say, "I don't know.")

- :
1. The client's name, age, sex, ethnic background, and permanent address.
 2. The client's present condition and the possible need for emergency action.
 3. The client's present location and the location where reported incidents occurred.
 4. The name of parents, guardians, or other persons who are responsible for the client's care if different from the permanent address of the client.
 5. The name and address of the person or persons who are alleged to be responsible for the abuse or neglect.

6. For children: names, ages, sex, and present location of siblings.
7. The names, ages, sex, and relationship of all persons in the client's home.
8. The nature and extent of the suspected abuse or neglect.
9. Any other evidence of alleged maltreatment.
10. The reason or reasons for suspecting abuse or neglect, including the physical or emotional condition of the client.
11. Any other relevant statements made by parents, client, or significant others.
12. Any available information about previous injuries the client has sustained.
13. Any actions taken by the reporting source or others.
14. The reporter's name, phone number, and address.
15. The relationship of the reporter to the client or their family.
16. Any other information the reporter believes may be helpful.

Appendix G

Possible Signs and Indicators of Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Abuse

Indicators of Child Abuse

Children and Vulnerable Adults often will not tell anyone about it. Therefore, it's important to observe and recognize signs of possible abuse.

*VA refers to Vulnerable Adults

1. Possible Signs of Physical Abuse

- Hostile and aggressive behavior toward others
- Fearfulness of parents and/or other adults.
- Destructive behavior toward self, others, and/or property
- Inexplicable fractures or bruises, inappropriate for Child/Youth/*VA's developmental stage
- Burns, facial injuries, pattern of repetitious bruises

2. Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse

- Exhibits severe depression and/or withdrawal
- Exhibits severe lack of self-esteem
- Failure to thrive
- Threatens or attempts suicide
- Speech and/or eating disorders
- Goes to extremes to seek Adult approval
- Extreme passive/aggressive behavior patterns

3. Possible Signs of Neglect

- Failure to thrive
- Pattern of inappropriate dress for climate
- Beggars or steals food; chronic hunger
- Depression
- Untreated medical conditions
- Poor hygiene

4. Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse

- Unusually advanced sexual knowledge and/or behavior for age and developmental stage
- Depression – cries often for no apparent reason
- Promiscuous behavior
- Runs away from home and refuses to return
- Difficulty walking or sitting.
- Bruised/bleeding in vaginal or anal areas
- Exhibits frequent headaches, stomach aches, extreme fatigue
- Sexually transmitted diseases

In addition to these, Children and VAs who have been sexually abused at church may exhibit some of the following:

- Unusual nervousness or anxiety about being left in the nursery or Sunday School class
- Reluctance to participate in church activities that were previously enthusiastically approached
- Comments such as "I don't want to be alone with _____" in reference to a childcare worker or Sunday school teacher
- Nightmares including Childcare worker or teacher as a frightening character
- Unexplained hostility toward a Childcare worker or teacher.

5. Possible Signs of Ritual Abuse

- Disruptions of memory or consciousness
- Unexplained mistrust and mood swings
- Flashbacks
- Eating Disorders
- Fear of the dark, especially at sundown or a full moon
- Agitation or despair that seems to occur in cycles
- Fear of ministers, priests, or others wearing robes or uniforms
- Nightmares or sleep disorders
- Any of the symptoms of sexual abuse

(Melton, 2008)

Indicators of Youth Abuse

Teens suffering abuse often will not tell anyone about it. Therefore, it's important to be able to be observant, listen carefully, and recognize signs of possible abuse.

*VA refers to Vulnerable Adults

1. Possible Signs of Physical Abuse

- Hostile and aggressive behavior toward others
- Fearfulness of parents and/or other adults.
- Destructive behavior toward self, others, and/or property.
- Burns, facial injuries, pattern of repetitious bruises

2. Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse

- Exhibits severe depression and/or withdrawal
- Exhibits severe lack of self-esteem
- Threatens or attempts suicide
- Eating and/or speech disorders
- Goes to extremes to seek adult approval
- Extreme passive/aggressive behavior patterns

3. Possible Signs of Neglect

- Pattern of inappropriate dress for climate
- Beggars or steals food; chronic hunger
- Depression
- Untreated medical conditions
- Poor hygiene

4. Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse

- Unusually advanced sexual knowledge and/or behavior for their age and developmental state
- Depression – cries often for no apparent reason
- Promiscuous behavior
- Runs away from home and refuses to return
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Bruised/bleeding in vaginal or anal areas
- Exhibits frequent headaches, stomach aches, extreme fatigue
- Sexually transmitted diseases

In addition to these, Youth and VA who have been sexually abused at church may exhibit some of the following:

- Unusual nervousness or anxiety about being left in the nursery or Sunday School class alone
- Reluctance to participate in church activities that were previously enthusiastically approached
- Comments such as “I don’t want to be alone with _____” in reference to a Sunday school teacher or Youth group leader
- Nightmares including a Youth group Adult leader or Sunday school teacher as a frightening character
- Unexplained hostility toward a Youth group Adult leader or teacher.

5. Possible Signs of Ritual Abuse

- Disruptions of memory or consciousness
- Unexplained mistrust and mood swings
- Flashbacks
- Eating Disorders
- Fear of the dark, especially at sundown or a full moon
- Agitation or despair that seems to occur in cycles
- Fear of ministers, priests, or others wearing robes or uniforms
- Nightmares or sleep disorders
- Any of the symptoms of sexual abuse

This material, with additional description of the scope of possible abuse, may be found on pages 36-38 and 66-67 of Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Abuse in the Church for Children and Youth by Joy Thornburg Melton, published by Discipleship Resources (2008)

Appendix H
CODE OF CONDUCT
A Resource for Training C-Y-VA Workers and Volunteers

This Code of Conduct defines individual responsibilities as clergy, leaders, employees or volunteers to meet the expectations of John Calvin Presbytery with respect to behavior or conduct in the service of their ministries, especially those which serve Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Adults.

General Requirements

Each person subject to this Code shall:

1. Act as a team member in fulfilling ministry objectives
2. Treat Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults with respect, and fairly without regard to race, age, gender, sexual orientation or religion
3. Practice those behaviors we regard as necessary and positive as well as to refrain from those behaviors which have been defined as prohibited.

General Prohibitions

The following behaviors are prohibited at all times:

1. Displaying affection toward a Child/Youth/VA in privacy.
2. Using profanity or telling off-color jokes.
3. Discussing any sexual encounters with or around C-Y-VAs or in any way involving C-Y-VAs in the worker's personal problems or issues.
4. Dating or become romantically involved with C-Y-VAs.
5. Using or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs in the presence of Children/Youth/VAs.
6. Possessing sexually oriented materials, including printed or online pornography, on John Calvin Presbytery property, or other property being utilized for a Presbytery event.
7. Having secrets with Children/Youth/VA.
8. Staring at or commenting on C-Y-VA's bodies.
9. Engaging in inappropriate or unapproved electronic communication with C-Y-VAs.
10. Working one-on-one with C-Y-VAs in a private setting or in any setting intended to thwart adherence to the Two-Adult Rule.
11. Abusing C-Y-VAs in anyway including (but not limited to) the following:
 - a. Physical abuse: hit, spank, shake, slap, unnecessarily restrain
 - b. Verbal abuse: degrade, threaten, curse
 - c. Sexual abuse: inappropriately touch, expose oneself, or engage in sexually oriented conversations
 - d. Mental abuse: shame, humiliate, act cruelly
 - e. Neglect: withhold food, water, shelter
 - f. Permit C-Y-VAs to engage in the following: Hazing, bullying, derogatory name-calling, games of Truth or Dare, ridicule, humiliation, or sexual activity
12. Manipulating or exploiting a "Vulnerable Adult" in any way

Specific Interaction Standards

Care should be taken to follow the Two- Adult Rule: Even if two Adults are in the vicinity of an activity, as often as possible include at least two Adults in any small groups formed for activities, and where possible, at least one Adult of each gender. One Adult should not be left alone one on one with a Child/Youth/VA.

If it is not possible to have two Adults within the same room or immediate space, there shall be a Floater Adult in the vicinity who is able to freely check on activities.

When a “roving” Adult is not immediately available, other precautions shall be taken, including

- i. ensuring the door to the room in which a C-Y-VA is present remains open,
- ii. ensuring additional Children are present so that no Child is alone with just one Adult, and
- iii. ensuring the period during which two Adults are not present (or one Adult and a Floater Adult) is temporary and not predictable or routine.

Each Child/Youth/VA Worker of this Presbytery shall conduct him/herself in a manner that reflects an understanding of the prevailing interest in protecting Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults.

The standards articulated below serve two purposes:

1. To protect Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults from abuse or grooming for abuse elsewhere; and
2. To protect/prevent staff and/or leadership from engaging in patterns of behavior that may be construed as abusive or predatory.

1. Approval and Affection – In providing approval or affection, the following guidelines apply:

Appropriate Physical Interactions

- Side Hugs
- Shoulder-to-shoulder or “temple hugs”
- Pats on the shoulder or back
- Handshakes
- High-fives and hand slapping
- Verbal praise
- Pats on the head when culturally appropriate
- Touching hands, shoulders, and arms
- Arms around shoulders
- Holding hands (with young children and perhaps VAs in escorting situations)

Inappropriate Physical Interactions

- Full-frontal hugs
- Kisses
- Showing affection in isolated area
- Lap sitting
- Wrestling, piggyback rides, or tickling
- Allowing a Child, Youth, or VA to cling to Worker’s leg
- Any type of massage given by or to a Child/Youth/VA
- Any form of affection that is unwanted by the Child/Youth/VA or Worker
- Compliments relating to physique or body development
- Touching bottom, chest, or genital areas

These may be inappropriate if unwanted by the Child or the employee or volunteer.

2. Verbal Interactions – The manner of speaking with C-Y-VAs establishes respect. The following guidelines apply:

Appropriate Verbal Interactions

- Positive reinforcement
- Appropriate jokes
- Encouragement
- Praise

Inappropriate Verbal Interactions

- Name-calling
- Discussing sexual encounters or in any way involving C-Y-VAs in the personal problems or issues of employees and volunteers
- Secrets
- Cursing
- Off-color or sexual jokes
- Shaming, belittling, derogatory remarks
- Harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate C-Y-VAs
- Derogatory remarks about them or their families

3. Out of Program Contact –Recognizing that roles of authority continue beyond the boundaries of the Presbytery or during a specific planned event, and knowing that off-site contacts may be unavoidable, the following forms of contact are considered appropriate and inappropriate:

Appropriate Out-of-Program Contact

- Taking groups of C-Y-VAs on an outing
- Attending sporting activities with groups of C-Y-VAs
- Attending functions at a Children/Youth/VA’s home with parents present

Inappropriate Out-of-Program Contact

- Taking C-Y-VAs on an outing without the parents’ consent
- Visiting C-Y-VAs in their home without a parent present
- Entertaining C-Y-VAs in the Worker’s home without parent permission and another Worker
- A lone Child/Youth/VA spending the night with a Worker.

4. One-on-One Interactions – Because most abuse occurs when an Adult is alone with a Child/Youth/VA, private one-on-one meetings with a Child/Youth/VA are prohibited unless the following guidelines are followed:

- a. When meeting one-on-one with a C-Y-VA, always do so in a public place in full view of others.
- b. Avoid physical affection that can be misinterpreted. Limit affection to pats on the shoulder, high fives, and handshakes.
- c. If meeting in a room or office, leave the door open or move to an area that can be easily observed by others passing by.
- d. Inform other employees and volunteers that you are alone with a C-Y-VA and ask them to randomly drop in. (Ask to be supervised.)
- e. Document and immediately report any unusual incidents, including disclosures of abuse or maltreatment, behavior problems and how they were handled, injuries, or any interactions that might be misinterpreted.

To the extent any of these guidelines may appear to be in conflict, the spirit of them is that one shall seek to be under the supervision of others while meeting privately with a C-Y-VA.

6. Guidelines for Discipling Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults – Sometimes Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults require instruction and some form of discipline regarding their own behavior. However, all such instruction and action should be constructive and done in a loving manner that keeps their safety and best interest in mind. The following guidelines should be followed in the implementation of any discipline for Children, Youth or Vulnerable Adults:

- a. Consult with the caretakers of Vulnerable Adults in order to develop an appropriate plan.
- b. Remind C-Y-VAs of proper group behavior and group guidelines. Expectations should be made very clear.
- c. All discipline should be assertive and positive and done in love. Immediate praise and recognition for positive actions are effective ways to encourage more of the same. It is often more effective to reward good behavior than to punish bad behavior.
- d. The practice of “redirecting” is the preferred method of correcting unwanted behavior. A Child, Youth or Vulnerable Adult may be moved to a different situation or area. Separate the Child-Youth-VA from others if he/she is having difficulty making good choices. When the C-Y-VA is settled, have him/her rejoin the group.
- e. In the event of chronic, unwanted behaviors, the Group or Program Leader should be contacted.
- f. Inappropriate discipline includes but is not limited to: corporeal punishment of any kind, derogatory sarcasm, put downs or any kind of verbal attack including yelling or screaming at a C-Y-VA.

7. Social Media Use for C-Y-VA Workers and Volunteers

Social networking is integrated into everyday life. Electronic tools aid us in communication, relationships, and information sharing in ways that were never before conceived as possible. The use of social media and networking can blur lines between work, personal life, and church relationships (Melton, 2014, p. 95).

These guidelines will be followed by all C-Y-VA Workers and Volunteers when using social media:

- a. Recognize and respect that your behaviors and actions online are also a reflection of how other Christians and people associated with this Presbytery may be portrayed.
- b. Recognize that all your posted words, images, and links are reflections on you individually, as a disciple of Jesus Christ, and as an employee or volunteer of the Presbytery.
- c. Obey the laws governing defamation, discrimination, harassment, and copyright and fair use of proprietary or confidential information.
- d. Work within your assigned ministry to establish appropriate boundaries especially as related to building relationships online with children, youth, vulnerable adults, parents, and other constituents of the Presbytery.
- e. Be very careful not to hinder or cause harm to the staff, pastors, members, or ministries of the Presbytery.
- f. Speak respectfully in your online posts and communications of and to all persons; and refrain from negative or disrespectful posts as well as posts on objectionable or inflammatory topics.
- g. Respect confidentiality and personal privacy. In the event you receive confidential or private information regarding a person or family involved with this Presbytery, do not disseminate that information without receiving direct, express consent and permission to do so.
- h. Respect differences, appreciate diversity of opinions, and speak and conduct yourself in a faithful and ethical manner at all times.
- i. Remember that everything you post online is discoverable and can be seen and shared for a very long time.
- j. Seek advice from your ministry team or other trusted leaders before posting anything if you have any doubt about the reasonableness of the post.
- k. Regularly monitor the amount of time you spend on social media, the ways in which you are utilizing social media, and its effect on your work or volunteer ministry and service in Christ’s name.

Appendix I
C-Y-VA WORKER AND VOLUNTEER COVENANT

As a C-Y-VA Worker, employed or volunteer, I understand the following Covenant (or one similar hereto) should be signed by every volunteer, staff employee, or other person who may serve, in whole or in part, in the capacity of a Child/Youth/VA Worker prior to their being engaged in that capacity by John Calvin Presbytery.

I understand that I am responsible for knowing and understanding the policies, rules and procedures of John Calvin Presbytery that have been adopted for the purpose of protecting C-Y-VAs whenever they are present at Presbytery events or under the oversight of church leaders, even if events are hosted by other entities.

I understand that I am responsible, to the fullest extent applicable, of governing my interaction with such C-Y-VAs outside of this Presbytery's events and activities in the interest of protecting their welfare.

Accordingly, I covenant to attend all required training aimed at learning about and understanding the application of John Calvin Presbytery's C-Y-VA Protection Policy and Procedures.

As a C-Y-VA Worker, employed or volunteer, I understand that my own conduct, words and actions are expected to be compliant with the Presbytery's policies and rules during on-site, off-site, and virtual/electronic events / activities during which I may be present, as well as during any other interactions I may have with C-Y-VAs and even during any interactions and communications I may have outside of the presence or immediate knowledge of such C-Y-VAs if those interactions or communications may become known to them, directly or indirectly. I understand that any indiscretion by myself or by others could be embarrassing or uncomfortable to a C-Y-VA and others.

Accordingly, I covenant to endeavor to follow John Calvin Presbytery's C-Y-VA Protection Policy and Procedures pertaining to the protection of children, youth, and vulnerable adults and to take appropriate measures to ensure that any conduct or communication not intended to be known to those C-Y-VAs, either directly or indirectly such as by word of mouth through others, is performed with utmost discretion and caution to prevent even unintended knowledge.

As a C-Y-VA Worker, employed or volunteer, I understand that persons in my position are expected to be role models, and that my words and actions should be always an example of law-abiding, respectful, positive and appropriate behavior for the C-Y-VAs I may encounter as well as for other Child/Youth/VA Workers and others with whom I may be interacting.

Accordingly, I covenant to comply with all laws (e.g., those restricting possession or use of alcohol, tobacco or controlled substances), to treat others with respect and compassion, to avoid foul or inappropriate language, and to otherwise ensure that my behavior is consistent with the highest expectations of conduct for a leader of C-Y-VAs and of representatives of the Presbytery.

I understand that any failure on my part in abiding by this Covenant may result in my being dismissed from my position and potentially other disciplinary actions.

Accordingly, I accept the responsibility of keeping this Covenant.

Signature _____ Printed Name: _____

Appendix J

CHILD/YOUTH/VULNERABLE ADULT CODE OF CONDUCT AND PLEDGE

Purpose for the code of conduct:

- To support a safe and enjoyable environment for all members of our youth activities.
- To provide clear and explicit expectations for social behaviors in all Youth activity settings.
- Provide leaders, students, and staff with appropriate actions that address student behaviors.

Parents, guardians and caregivers who have any questions or concerns are encouraged to contact

Behavioral Expectations:

A. Be responsible...

1. Clean up after yourself before going home.
2. Everyone present at youth activity is expected to participate in planned activities.
3. All cell phones/iPods/electronic devices should be turned off during all activities unless otherwise stated. Phones may be taken up and given back at the end of the activity.

B. Be safe...

1. At no time should a youth wander off or leave the group without adult supervision or prior permission.
2. At no time shall a youth enter the classroom without a youth leader present.
3. If the youth classroom door is closed students are to wait outside.

C. Be respectful...

1. Raise your hand to speak in class. Do not interrupt others.
2. Always treat fellow youth, visitors, leaders, and any guest speakers and musicians with dignity and respect.
3. All perspectives are to be listened to carefully and responded to in a courteous fashion. At no time should derogatory comments be made about anyone or her/his opinions.
4. Verbal and physical harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. This may take many forms and can be physical, verbal or written. Words and actions matter...we follow the Golden Rule. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."
5. Taking another youth or leader's property is unacceptable unless express permission has been given to you by the owner of the object (i.e. cell phones, iPods, etc.)
6. Alcohol, drugs, tobacco, weapons, or fireworks are never allowed at youth events.

D. Be respectful of Your Leaders:

Respect all youth leaders by obeying their guidance and instruction. Before most events, general guidelines will be laid out for the group. Anyone who breaks the guidelines may be dismissed from an activity.

E. Responsibilities of Parents / Guardians:

1. Respect, understand and support all leadership and policies of _____
2. Recognize and understand that youth leaders and personnel must enforce the above rules and policies to ensure a safe learning environment for all.
3. Teach your children to respect the rights of others and to follow youth group rules.
4. Emphasize the importance of being a model person in both the home, the church, and in the community!

F. Consequences:

The consequences for misbehavior outlined below aim to exemplify grace and forgiveness. It is our goal that any student who receives any offense learns from it and returns to the youth activity with a clean slate.

1st Offense: The student will receive a verbal warning.

2nd Offense: The student will be pulled aside by a leader to discuss the offense.

3rd Offense: The student will be pulled aside by a leader and will be asked to call his/her parents, explain why they are calling (i.e., what actions got them into trouble).

4th Offense: Parents will be called and asked to retrieve the youth from the activity.

Signatures:

By signing this document, you pledge to abide by these behavioral expectations and consequences.

Student Behavioral Pledge:

As a member of John Calvin Presbytery, I pledge to follow this Code of Conduct, to respect others and myself, and to treat everyone in my church community with fairness and consideration.

I understand and agree church and youth activities must be a positive and cooperative environment so that everyone can learn and grow.

Student and Parent Acknowledgment:

Youth Name Printed and Signature

Date:

Parent Name Printed and Signature

Date

Appendix K
AUTHORIZATION FORM FOR PHOTO AND VIDEO USAGE

I, _____, as legal parent or guardian, authorize

John Calvin Presbytery to:

(Please initial in the space provided after each bulleted item that you authorize):

1. Take pictures of my child to be posted inside the Presbytery. _____
2. Take pictures of my child for use in printed publications and on the Presbytery's website and social media accounts. _____
3. Include my child in videos that will be used for internal Presbytery purposes only (worship, internal communication, and invitation). _____
4. Include my child in videos that will be used on the Presbytery's website, social media, and YouTube accounts. _____

Signed: _____
Parent or Legal Guardian

Date: _____

Phone Number for Contact: _____

(Thornburg, 2014)

Appendix L
TRAINING MODEL FOR CHILD/YOUTH/VULNERABLE ADULT (C-Y-VA) WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS

This model is adapted from *Safe Sanctuaries* (Melton, 2008, pp 125-129) and is meant to be used with the information within this Protection Policy and Procedures. The training can be modified and adjusted to meet the needs of the entity providing the training. A minimum of two hours will be needed.

Implementation: A comprehensive strategy for the prevention of child abuse in a church or Presbytery cannot be done without providing a substantial amount of ongoing education for the parents, leadership, workers and volunteers of C-Y-VA activities. For example, new or refresher trainings are needed:

- a. When there are new leaders, workers or volunteers.
- b. At the beginning of a new Sunday School term in the fall.
- c. If State child abuse reporting statutes change.
- d. Prior to off-campus events such as youth camps or overnight mission trips.

I. OPENING WORSHIP

A. Prayer of Invocation:

Gracious and most merciful God, you have brought us together in witness to your love of all children. Open our hearts and minds in this moment and prepare us to receive your message. Show us your will and fill us to overflowing with courage to face the reality of child abuse. Give us energy and dedication enough to make this, your church, a holy and hallowed place where all your children may be safe and secure as they grow in faith and in their knowledge of your presence in their lives! Amen.

B. Suggested Scriptures:

Exodus 22:21-23

Matthew 19:14

Luke 9:46-48

C. Brief Devotion

You may begin by recalling the baptismal ritual for children, reminding the participants of the pledge made by the congregation at each child's baptism. Acknowledge and list the many ways your congregation or Presbytery lives out that pledge through its current ministries with children. Conclude by introducing the C-Y-VA Policy and Procedures as an important component of your church or Presbytery's ministry

II. INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION

A. Current Occurrences:

Set the stage for the substance of the training by introducing recent news reports from your own community's newspapers or television broadcasts related to incidents of child and/or vulnerable adult abuse. Also, in this section, you can present news material related to any current litigation involving churches.

B. Current Statistics – Do the Math

The following statistics are from Melton, 2008, p.34. You may want to revise with current numbers:

In 2008, the National Center for Child Abuse and Neglect reported there were more than 3 million incidents of physical abuse and/or neglect per year in the United States of America. That equates to more than 30 out of every 1000 children.

Studies have estimated that 1 out of 3 girls is sexually abused before the age of 18. Similarly, studies indicate 1 out of 7 boys have been sexually abused before the age of 18. Even more frightening is that these numbers may be underestimated since many children are reluctant to report abuse.

The National Committee for the prevention of Child Abuse in the United States reported that at least 1490 deaths attributable to child abuse and/or neglect occur each year.

Think about the first number listed: 3 million incidents of abuse per year. That equals 8219 children abused each day; approximately 343 children abused each hour; nearly 6 children abused per minute; and one child abused every 10 seconds, night or day, weekday or weekend, including Sundays!

C. The Church at Risk

In light of the statistics, Melton (2008, pp 35-36) suggests that any organization involved with children and youth is a place where abuse could occur. What makes the risk for churches especially high? Several factors include:

- 1.** Churches behave as relatively trusting organizations, relying upon their members and their leaders to conduct themselves appropriately. Too often, this trusting attitude persists even in the face of questions or reports of misconduct. The truth is that more than 85% of the reported incidents of abuse are perpetrated by an individual that the child already knows and trusts, including persons in the church.
- 2.** Churches are notoriously inactive when it comes to screening volunteers and/or employees who work with children and youth. Too often, no application is used and no references are checked at all before a total stranger is welcomed aboard.
- 3.** Churches routinely provide opportunities for close contact and for close personal relationships with children and youth. Indeed, they are nurtured and encouraged as we try to live out the gospel message.

Simultaneously with the growth of the church's need for greater numbers of workers with children and youth, there has been an explosion in litigation against the church for incidents of child sexual abuse. Every state now has some statutory requirements in place for the reporting of an incident of child abuse. This, coupled with media attention has increased the number of criminal charges against the perpetrators of abuse and the number of civil lawsuits seeking monetary damages for the injuries suffered by the child.

The concept of churches receiving immunity from litigation is not viable. While the church cannot be the absolute guarantor of the safety of each person within its community and its ministries, it must be recognized that every church can be responsibly attentive to reducing and eliminating circumstances that could lead to harm or abuse.

It is not uncommon for churches to be left with large settlements in cases of child abuse. Melton (2008, p. 36) reported a case involving a church camp which resulted in a settlement exceeding a million dollars for two victims. The camp had very limited insurance coverage and other resources with which to pay the settlement. Thus, the annual conference had to step in, along with the local churches in the annual conference, to provide the funding of the settlement. In another case, the claims of three victims against two annual conferences and

two local churches were settled in an amount exceeding five million dollars. Settlements or verdicts of this size are staggering to local churches, camps, schools, and denominations. It is not an overstatement to say that cases like these have the potential to bankrupt ministries financially and spiritually (2008).

Melton (2008) urges that the church should not fear an accusation of abuse in such a way as to withdraw from youth ministry. Rather, it is the responsibility of each church and Presbytery to work to assure that ministries are carried out under safe circumstances.

III. REVIEW OF THE CHILD/YOUTH/VULNERABLE ADULT PROTECTION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

A Review of the C-Y-VA Protection Policy and Procedures shall cover but not be limited to the following:

1. Discuss how to identify first aid supplies/practices at the location of the events. This should include the identification of staff/volunteers who are certified in first aid and CPR.
2. Continue by reading through the Definition of Terms near the beginning of the policy. Other areas will be covered in the steps below.
3. Review **Appendix G** – Signs and Indications of Abuse.
4. Look at **Section I**, page 3 titled “Position Requirements...Applications, Screening, Background Checks.”
 - a. Discuss the importance of the application and screening processes for selection of Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Workers and Volunteers (including camp staff).
 - b. Briefly look over and discuss Appendices **A, A-2, A-3, B, and C** for application requirements and information on Criminal Background Checks.
 - c. Discuss reactions to the need for Criminal Background Checks. Work toward consensus that while it may seem offensive to long-time active members, it is simply a requirement for everyone working with Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults in schools, churches, and anywhere adults are working with children and the vulnerable.
5. Move through **Sections II, III, and IV** (pages 5-10) to discuss appropriate boundaries with C-Y-VAs along with what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate interaction.
6. Also review Appendices **D, H, I, J, and K** concerning behavioral expectations, codes of conduct for workers, volunteers, children, youth, and vulnerable adults, parents, and the signing of pledged covenants.
7. Review **Section V** page 10 on Reporting Rules and Procedures. Reference and discuss Appendices E, F, and G as you move through this section.
Procedures. Reference and discuss the different Appendices as you move through this section.
8. Briefly review **Sections VI and VII** on Confidentiality and Ongoing Training.
9. Homework: Participants who will be working with Children/Youth/Vulnerable Adults will review and sign the Covenant in Appendix I. Each trainee will sign and retain a copy of the signed Covenant, and a copy will be kept on file by the Presbytery. Some will need more time before feeling comfortable signing the Covenant after an intense training session. Assign a deadline for returning the completed forms.

IV. CLOSING WORSHIP

1. Read aloud from Luke 8:46-48

⁴⁶ An argument started among the disciples as to which of them would be the greatest. ⁴⁷ Jesus, knowing their thoughts, took a little child and had him stand beside him. ⁴⁸ Then he said to them, “Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For it is the one who is least among you all who is the greatest.”

2. Pray responsively:

Leader: O, God, by our presence here today,

People: We welcome the children, the youth, the vulnerable!

Leader: O God, by our promise in Holy Baptism,

People: We welcome the children, the youth, the vulnerable!

Leader: O, God by our participation in the ministries of this congregation,

People: We welcome the children, the youth, the vulnerable!

Leader: O, God, by our commitment to keeping this place holy and safe in every way,

People: We welcome the children, the youth, the vulnerable!

All: Amen!

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Resources

Church Mutual partnered with Ministry Safe Abuse Systems to provide legal standards of care to reduce the risk of sexual abuse through preventative measures: <https://www.churchmutual.com/169/Sexual-Abuse-Prevention>

Another good resource is an online publication titled *We Won't Let it Happen Here: Preventing Child Abuse in the Church*. (2nd ed.). The booklet has pertinent information, training ideas, and tips for policy formation. <https://www.insuranceboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/AbusePrevention-WeWontLetItHappenHere-2dEd-PCUSA-2009-10.pdf>

Joy Thornburg Melton has several *Safe Sanctuaries* publications full of resources, policy building guidance, and training tips.

All volunteers are encouraged to learn more about Mandated Reporting by going to <http://protectmokids.com> as well as the websites listed below:

Reporting for both Children and Vulnerable Adults in Kansas: www.dcf.ks.gov

Reporting for Children in Missouri: <http://dss.mo.gov>

Reporting for Vulnerable Adults in Missouri: <http://health.mo.gov/safety/abuse>

Resources for planning ministry with older and vulnerable adults include: www.gbod.org; www.discipleshipresources.org; and www.aarp.org

SEE ALSO (Separate Document): TEMPLATE for Churches to use in writing their C/Y/VA Protection Policies