

SAINT PAUL'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR
CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES**
FINAL OCTOBER 26, 2009



Saint Paul's United Methodist Church seeks to create a safe environment for all children and youth involved in our programs. In order to insure their safety, we have developed the following list of policies and procedures designed to prevent risk of injury through accident or abuse. Jesus made the importance of children clear in his ministry. In Matthew 19:13-14, Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs." The care of Children is a sacred trust bestowed upon us by God and we must go the extra mile to prevent any possibility of abuse.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

Child and Youth Protection Policy

for

**Saint Paul's United Methodist Church
Tallahassee, Florida**

Introduction

A central tenet of the Christian faith is the inherent value and worth of all children, youth, and adults. Children and youth are least able to protect themselves in our society and are particularly vulnerable to abuse and neglect. The Saint Paul's United Methodist Church desires to protect the youth and children who participate in the life of this congregation. While these policies are intended to protect children and youth participating in activities of this church, any of the policies (excluding state law requirements) may be modified as necessary on a case-by-case basis by the pastors and/or programmatic staff.

We believe implementing a policy and adopting procedures to protect our children recognizes that:

our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection to the little ones, the Children. The Social Principles of the United Methodist Church states that ". . . children must be protected from economic, physical and sexual exploitation and abuse." Tragically, Churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, and exploitation. . . occur in Churches, both, large and small, urban and rural. The problem cuts across all economic, cultural and racial lines. . . . God calls us to make our Churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from abuse. Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church.

This Children and Youth Protection Policy document was approved the St. Paul's United Methodist Church Council on October 26, 2009.

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SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

I. Definitions

A. “Child” and “Youth” and “Adult”

A “child” is anyone age 11 or under, or in 5th grade or lower.

A “youth” is anyone not a “child”, age 18 or under, who is participating in youth activities for up to 4 months following high school graduation.

An “adult” is anyone 18 years of age or older and graduated from high school.

B. An **Unscreened Adult Volunteer** is someone not paid by the church and who has not been screened. They may work in a room with children and youth only if a Screened Adult is also present.

C. A **Screened Adult** has gone through the screening process and has passed the screening (Section II). Plus, these persons have taken and are up to date on the training (Section III). Persons required to be screened include the following:

1. a **paid staff person**, paid by the church and overseen by the Staff Parish Committee. This includes but is not limited to, the pastors, director of programs, directors of children and youth programs, all choir directors, nursery staff, administrative assistants, kitchen coordinator, security personnel, sexton, organist, accompanists and music coordinator;

2. a **volunteer** who has frequent and regular contact with children or youth as determined by the pastors or one of the directors of programs (see paid staff person above). This includes but is not limited to, all youth and children choir directors and accompanists; all youth and children Sunday School teachers; volunteers in the nursery on the regular rotation schedule; acolyte leaders; adult youth leaders, youth lay team, nursery committee, children’s committee, youth bible study leaders, children’s church teachers; and the chairpersons vacation bible school, or;

3. a **leader** of an organization that SPUMC sponsors (“sponsored organizations”). This includes but is not limited to, leaders of all scouting programs and similar groups.

D. “Child/Youth Abuse”¹

For purposes of this Policy, **child/youth abuse** is defined as any of the following:

1. Physical Abuse:

In addition to Florida Statutes 39, 784, and 827 defining physical

¹ Statutes are cited to indicate that Saint Paul's United Methodist Church will follow the legal definitions of abuse as defined by Florida law.

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abuse, any violent non-accidental contact that results in injury. This includes, but is not limited to, striking, biting, or shaking. Injuries include bruises, fractures, cuts, and burns.

2. Sexual Abuse:

In addition to Florida Statutes 39, 775, and 800 defining sexual abuse, any form of sexual activity with a child or youth, whether at the Church, at home, or any other setting. The abuser may be an adult, an adolescent, or another minor.

3. Emotional Abuse:

In addition to Florida Statutes 39 and 827 defining emotional abuse, any pattern of intentional conduct which crushes a child or youth's spirit or attacks his/her self-worth through rejection, threats, terrorizing, isolation, or belittling.

- E. Screened or screening:** A national criminal background check. The church will pay the cost of this screening.

II. Screening

A. Screening Requirements

Each person that will be in a position requiring regular involvement with children or youth must:

1. authorize the church to conduct a nationwide criminal background check (Appendix I), finger prints and/or Social Security Numbers may be required for the background check;
2. attend initial training, be screened, and pass the screening prior to employment or service;
3. read an updated copy of the SPUMC Safe Environment pamphlet annually; and,
4. attend training, be re-screened, and pass re-screening every three (3) years.

B. Paid Church Staff

1. As a condition of employment, all applicants for a paid staff position must comply with Section II.A.1-4. Failure of the applicant to grant such authorization to the church will automatically eliminate that job candidate.
2. Where it has been determined that an applicant failed the national criminal background check and/or it has been determined that the applicant should **not** work with children or youth, those persons involved with the decision should handle it in a sensitive manner. The appointed clergy or her/his designee should inform the applicant in person. The specific reasons for the decision should be given, whenever possible.

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3. For a case-by-case exception to a failed screening (Section II.F):
 - (a) law enforcement agency or court records about the specifics of the incident/crime, including any associated violations and co-defendants, must be collected, and
 - (b) the exception must be approved by a current designated representative of the Staff-Parish Committee.

C. Adult Volunteers

1. Before beginning regular work with children or youth, adult volunteers must comply with Sections II and III.
2. Any forms, interview questions or other procedures required for paid staff may be utilized for adult volunteer positions where appropriate and at the discretion of the pastors, programmatic staff, or Administrative Assistant.

D. Records Retention

All criminal background information, interview notes, references and other personnel records shall be kept in a locked cabinet in the appointed clergy's office that is a safe place to store these records. There should be a system in place that gives those who need these records access. The following persons shall have access to this locked cabinet/safe: pastors; program directors, and administrative assistant.

E. Alternative to Church Screening

In lieu of authorizing the church to conduct a nationwide criminal background check, a person may choose to present evidence that they have passed a nationwide criminal background check as a requirement of their job and can produce evidence of current and continuing employment with that organization. Such evidence must be presented at least every three years. Failure of the applicant to grant the church authorization to make copies of these documents will automatically eliminate that candidate from the position or opportunity to volunteer as a screened adult volunteer without undergoing the church screening, as outlined in Section II.A.1-4. This alternative to the church screening includes, but is not limited to those certified to teach in the State of Florida or any active Florida or local law enforcement officer/fire-rescue worker.

F. Failed Screening

If any of the following activities are revealed to the Church during a criminal background check, that applicant for screening will have failed.

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1. all felonies,
2. any misdemeanor that involves substance abuse, use, or possession,
3. any crime of physical abuse of children,
4. any sex crime, or
5. any stalking violations or crimes.

Failure of a background check/screening requires dismissal of paid staff or prohibit an adult volunteer from participating as a screened adult in any of the positions enumerated in section I.C. Failure includes any conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to a pretrial diversion program or entering of a plea of guilty or *Nolo Contendere* (no contest) for any of the following as defined in Florida Statutes or equivalent federal law.

In addition to those crimes enumerated above, any conduct that is inconsistent with the standards of public conscience and good morals should result in a failed screening. Any conduct sufficiently notorious to bring the individual concerned into public disgrace or disrespect and impair the individual's service to the church community may result in a failed screening.

With the exception of any and all sex crimes or violent crimes, any individual may be approved by authorized representative from the staff-parish committee, on a case-by-case basis despite failing the criminal background check if any of the crimes or incidents, including the time served incarcerated or during the probation period, occurred more than five (5) years ago. Since information about juvenile records cannot be obtained, it is recommended that more time pass from the incident and the hiring if the incident occurred when the individual was under 18 years old. Merely self-reporting of any of the above 'failures' does not provide an exception to this policy (Section II.B.3).

If an applicant for either a paid staff position or a screened adult volunteer position fails the criminal background check (see below) that person may continue to attend Saint Paul's United Methodist Church. If this person is also a parent of a child or youth attending the church, the results of the background check will be provided to all paid staff and appropriate Sunday School teachers if necessary to ensure the safety of all children. When reporting sensitive information to paid staff, staff shall be instructed to keep the information confidential.

G. Self-Reporting of Arrests & Convictions

All screened adults, both paid staff and screened volunteers, shall self-report to a pastor or the appropriate staff person as soon as possible

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of any arrests/charges involving the abuse of a child or the sale and/or possession of controlled substances. Such notice shall not be considered an admission of guilt. In addition, the adult shall self-report any conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to a pretrial diversion program, or entering of a plea of guilty or *Nolo Contendre* (no contest) for any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation within 48 hours after the final judgment. All information must be kept private and confidential and only provided to those listed in the previous paragraph and others only as necessary.

H. Responsibility for Implementation

Although not required to personally accomplish the above tasks, the pastors shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with subparagraphs (A) through (F) above and provide updated copies of the SPUMC Safe Environment brochure to the staff person in charge of Programs, Children's and Youth Lay Teams, Nursery Committee, and each adult who regularly works with children and youth not otherwise under the supervision of the above committees (for example, the cherub choir director and acolyte coordinator). In addition, the following shall ensure continued responsibility for the subsequent tasks:

1. Staff person in charge of programs working with the Children's and Youth Lay Teams shall ensure that all teachers and leaders working with children and youth comply with Section II.A.1-4. Additionally the Children's and Youth Lay Teams shall provide annual training opportunities.
2. Administrative Assistant in charge of personnel issues (AA) shall maintain a database documenting completion of or compliance with all requirements outlined in Section II.A.1-4. The AA shall also ensure that all organizations sponsored by SPUMC receive, at minimum, annual updates of the SPUMC Safe Environment pamphlet. In addition, the AA shall obtain current copies of the results of all screening results for the leadership from each sponsored organizations to be kept on file.
3. Nursery Coordinator shall ensure that all paid nursery staff and regular nursery volunteers comply with Section II.A.1-4.
4. Pastors shall ensure that the Staff-Parish Committee has a copy of the latest policy, particularly the forms and guidance for hiring.

III. Training Opportunities and Resources

1. The pastors shall ensure at least one training seminar a year is held on the Church property.
 - a. the training shall include:

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- the definition and recognition of child abuse,
 - the need to maintain a positive classroom environment, including appropriate discipline and age-level characteristics,
 - the appropriate behavior for teachers and leaders of child/youth events,
 - abuse reporting responsibilities and procedures,
 - definition of appropriate interpersonal boundaries,
 - the Church's policy and procedures on child abuse and the reasons for them,
 - who to report allegations of abuse and
 - how to respond to abuse;
 - the Church's child protection procedures including:
 - SPUMC rules regarding child/adult ratios, etc.,
 - SPUMC rules regarding mandatory sign in/sign out procedures,
 - SPUMC transportation rules, and
 - SPUMC trip and retreat requirements.
 - emergency response procedures
 - fire & tornado drills and
 - location of 'safe places' both within the church and outside depending upon your location.
2. To educate parents and the general population of the church, the pastors shall ensure that the SPUMC Safe Environment brochure shall be made available on line and the link distributed via e-mail; the Epistle, and bulletin periodically or at least annually.
 3. The pastors shall ensure that SPUMC Safe Environment brochure is posted throughout the church including Sanders Hall, at each entrance to the Sanctuary, outside each classroom in the nursery wing, on each floor of the education wing including outside the Foundation. Extra copies of the brochure shall be readily available in each wing and level of the church.
 4. Resource materials on child abuse, age-appropriate based discipline, and similar topics shall be located in the nursery, SPARKS room(s), First Aid closet (1st Aid book), and Foundation. The congregation shall be informed of these resources.

IV. Supervision of Children and Youth

A. General Rules

1. When feasible, each room set aside for children/youth should have a door with a window. Half doors shall be located on rooms for nursery, toddler, and preschool children to permit outside

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- observation while preventing the children from wandering outside the room.
2. The "Two Person Rule" is defined as having at least two adults in any room, one of which must be a Screened Adult. This Rule is in effect when children/youth and adults are not in a location that is readily visible or observable. **If there is only one child or one adult, then classes must be combined or the activity cancelled.**
 3. Anytime children & parents are both on church property and the children/youth supervisors/teachers must leave, the supervisor/teacher must take the child/youth to where the parent is and the child/youth becomes the parent's responsibility. Children will not be left alone.
 4. A "floater" person designated by the pastors, the Education Team, or Youth Lay Team should periodically check with each classroom during the Sunday School hours.
 5. If the only two adults are family members, a third, unrelated adult should be present.
 6. All adult volunteers or paid staff must be at least four years older than the age group they are supervising. For example, an 18 year old high school graduate may supervise 14 year olds or younger. People with an age gap of less than four years can be helpers but cannot be adult supervisors or chaperones.
 7. Any violation or possible breach of the policies of this document shall be reported to the Senior Pastor as soon as possible. At minimum, a written report of the incident shall be completed and provided to the Pastor. In addition to a written report, serious violations shall be immediately reported to the Senior Pastor personally (by phone or e-mail). The incident should be reported on the "CYPP Incident Report" form. See Appendix IV.
 8. When an exception to any of the ratio or adult volunteer supervision requirements is being considered, the Committee overseeing the activity must approve the exception and permission for the exception must be obtained from each parent/guardian of each child/youth participating for the specific activity, prior to that activity or the activity must be cancelled. This request and each parent response shall be filed with a CYPP Incident Report. There shall be no exceptions permitted from the screened adult requirement - there must always be at least one screened adult.

B. Supervision of Activities on Church Property

1. Crib/infant

The Two Person Rule applies (Section IV.A.2). The adult to child ratio must be **1 adult per 4 children**. (For example, for 12 children, there must be 3 adults and at least one must be a Screened Adult). When feasible

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there should be two screened adults present. The Sign-in/Sign-out procedure applies (Section IV.D).

2. **Toddler – Pre-K** (walking to approximately 4 years).

The Two Person Rule applies (Section IV. A.2). The adult to child ratio must be **1 adult per 8 children**. (For example, for ≤15 children, there must be 2 adults and one must be a Screened Adult; for 17 children there must be 3 adults and at least one must be a Screened Adult.) The Sign-in/Sign-out procedure applies (Section IV.D).

3. **Kindergarten – fifth grade**

The Two Person Rule applies (Section IV. A.2). The adult to child ratio must be **1 adult per 15 children**. (For example, for ≤ 15 children, there must be 2 adults and one must be a Screened Adult; for 31 children there must be 3 adults and at least one must be a Screened Adult. The Sign-in/Sign-out procedure applies (Section IV.D).

4. **Grades 6 – 12**

The Two Person Rule should apply (Section IV. A.2). The adult to child ratio is **1 adult to 15 youth** (for example, for ≤ 15 youth, there should be 2 adults and one adult must be a Screened Adult). However, where two adults are not available to supervise each room, the room doors are to remain open and one adult must be screened otherwise the class or activity must be combined with another class or activity or the class/activity must be cancelled. Rules apply to all youth as defined in section I.A. Parent/Guardian Sign-in/Sign-out procedures do not apply.

AGE	A-C RATIO	TRAVEL RATIO	MIN. (but see G & A8)	OTHER INFO
Infant	1 adult to 4 children	No travel	2 adults at all times	Must sign in/sign out
Toddler to Pre-kinder.	1 adult to 8 children	No travel	2 adults at all times	Must sign in/sign out
Kindergarten-Fifth grade	1 adult to 15 children	1 adult to 8 children	2 adults at all times	Must sign in/sign out
Grades 6-12	1 adult to 15 youth	1 adult to 8 youth	1 screened adult w/in view of other adults	No sign -in or sign out required

C. Counseling of Youth and Children

In instances of youth or child counseling where circumstances dictate counseling would be most effective on a one-on-one basis, an appropriate church staff person may meet individually with a youth or child with the

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knowledge of at least one other staff member. At any counseling session with children or youth, the door of the room will remain open for the entire session unless there is glass in the door or wall which gives a clear view into the room. If another adult is not in the building when the counseling occurs, the session should be moved to a public place or outdoors where other people are present.

If, at the initial meeting, the counselor determines s/he is not qualified to address the child's/youth's need effectively, referral to another more qualified counselor should be considered. This is not meant to govern a licensed professional counselor in a paid counseling relationship with a child or youth.

D. Open Door Policy

Parents, volunteers, or church staff are welcome to visit and observe all programs and classrooms at any time.

E. Sign-in/Sign-out Procedure

Adults responsible for children who are Infant through fifth grade shall sign in their child and indicate the names of the authorized persons to whom the child may be signed out. The activities for which this procedure is applicable include, but are not limited to: Sunday school and Vacation Bible School. Non-authorized adults or other minors/children may not sign out children from any activity. All other children's activities where parents do not sign in children (such as SPARKS) must complete a registration form for each child and state who is authorized to pick up the child after the activity. All SPUMC adult volunteers are authorized to require any adult picking up a child to see a photo identification to verify that the adult is the authorized guardian/parent. Youth should sign themselves in and out of all activities including but not limited to Sunday School, Open Foundation, and Sunday night youth.

F. Supervision of Activities Off of SPUMC Property

For all activities off church property the appropriate Lay Committee (Education, Youth Lay Team, etc.) must approve of the off-site location. Each child /youth participating in such activities must have a signed permission form from their parent/guardian on record for these activities.

G. Time Following Group Events

Following child/youth group events, occasionally a child's/youth's transportation arrives after all other participants have departed. In such a circumstance, a child/youth may unavoidably be supervised by one screened adult. Under this circumstance, the general rule requiring the presence of two screened adults is suspended and the screened adult is responsible for exercising his/her best judgment for the participant's well-being.

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V. Transportation

Transporting youth and children is an important concern. Their safety can be at risk in a variety of ways. Therefore, certain discretion must be used regarding transportation depending upon the event attended, the locale of the event, and the ages of the children/youth participating.

A. Requirements

1. All supervision requirements and ratios apply (section IV).
2. Notarized Medical release forms (Appendix III) must be carried for each child during the trip, either by the trip leader or by the driver of each vehicle.
3. Drivers should be screened.
4. When a child/youth is transported in any vehicle, the driver must be at least 21 years old with a valid driver's license and either be the child's/youth's parent/guardian or a Screened Adult.
5. When a trip is planned and the destination is expected to be 100 miles or more from the point of departure, drivers must:
 - a. Be listed on an "approved driver list" maintained in the church office (section V.A.6).
 - b. Submit a trip itinerary, detailing where and when they are taking children/youth.
 - c. At least 2 adult drivers must be in each vehicle.
6. In order for a driver to be placed on the "approved driver list," :
 - a. A Motor Vehicle Record search must be conducted and reviewed by the appointed clergy and supply pastors or his/her designee. One or more Type A violations, two or more Type B violations, and/or any combination of accidents within the past twelve months is unacceptable. (The Risk Management Conference office will advise how to obtain a Motor Vehicle Record of a driver, typically without charge. Call (800) 282-8011, ext. 137.)
 - b. The driver shall receive training from a designated representative of the Transportation Committee for the church owned vehicle being operated.
 - c. A copy of the driver's license shall be on file at the church.
 - d. A Safe Environment Policy shall be provided to the driver upon acceptance of the keys to the vehicle.
7. The Church shall not hold activities that require the transportation of children under the age of four. For children ages 4 through 5 years a separate carrier, an integrated child seat or a seat belt may be used. The number of passengers must not exceed the number of seat belts or child-restraint seats.
8. Drivers must ensure that each passenger in the vehicle is properly restrained in a safety belt or appropriate integrated child seat at all times.

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9. Drivers ensure that they have accurate directions, including a designated destination route, and should not deviate from it except in cases of emergency or road detours.
10. The use of personal stereo systems with headphones while driving is prohibited. The use of cell phones while driving is prohibited.
11. When there is reason to believe it would not be safe for a child/youth to ride in a vehicle, the adults responsible should intervene and take reasonable steps to make alternative arrangements for all the youth/children involved. For example, if the driver appears to be impaired in any way, an adult must intervene on behalf of the child/youth.
12. Parents must provide an annual permission slip for youth who drive their own vehicles to in-town events. Youth drivers are not allowed to drive other youth passengers between youth sponsored activities. Sibling (full, step & half) passengers are at the discretion of the parents and do not require written consent. The church is not responsible for monitoring how youth arrive or leave an event or church/youth sponsored activity.

VI. Trip and Retreat Supervision

Trip and Retreat settings call for different child/youth protection requirements depending on the circumstances. The following requirements should always be implemented, and, depending on the circumstances of the setting, some or all other recommendations should be implemented. A trip or retreat is any travel that includes an overnight stay.

A. Requirements (mandatory)

1. There will be at least two Screened Adults present for all trips, retreats and other events/activities that involve children/youth overnight or are away from the church campus. The ratio of adults to children/youth under these circumstances is one adult per eight (8) children/youth. All adults traveling on a trip/retreat must be screened regardless of whether the adult is acting as a chaperone.
2. There will be at least one Screened Adult for each gender present at co-ed, overnight events. However, if the genders will be separated at any time from the other gender, two Screened Adults for each gender must attend.
3. At single gender events, at least two of the screened adults present shall be of the same gender as the children/youth.
4. The person in charge of youth/children for each overnight trip and/or retreat shall carry, at all times, parental permission slips and original, notarized medical release forms that give permission for emergency medical care.

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5. There shall never be one youth and one adult assigned to a hotel room, tent, or cabin room, unless the adult is a parent/guardian/family member of the child/youth.
6. In hotels, chaperones should have all room keys to all rooms, at least at night. Youth rooms should be taped with clear tape when the youth are supposed to be in their rooms (i.e. at night). Screened adults shall make random monitoring trips and must check every room, unannounced, at least once each night. Adult rooms must be dispersed throughout the floor(s) where there are youth rooms.

B. Recommendations

1. Whenever possible, a hotel should be selected with rooms open to the interior of the building (i.e. open into an enclosed common area and not to the exterior of the hotel building).
2. Whenever possible, tents should be arranged such that all entrances face each other and/or towards a common area.

VII. Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse

- A. Everyone in the church has a moral responsibility and a legal duty to report suspected abuse, abandonment, or neglect whenever it comes to their attention, regardless of where that abuse takes place. Reporting abuse is a form of ministering to the needs of those crying out for help. Therefore, when abuse is suspected, **immediately** notify the Central Abuse Hotline at (800) 96-ABUSE (800/962-2973). **This is a requirement of the Florida “MANDATED REPORTER” law.**
- B. Immediately, yet with dignity and respect for the sacred worth of the accused, remove the accused from further involvement with children and/or youth. Once the proper authorities have been contacted and the safety of the child or youth is secured, the appointed clergy or other designated persons, if it is safe to do so, should inform the accused that abuse has been reported.
- C. If abuse is observed by, disclosed to, or suspected by a volunteer and/or paid staff member of the church, the observer shall report the incident immediately to the appointed clergy. If the appointed clergy is not available, the matter should be reported to the District Superintendent at office (850) 386-2155, or cell phone (850) 559-0064. Appendix IV

If the accused is the appointed clergy or a member of her/his family, the allegations shall be immediately reported to the District Superintendent

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and immediately reported to the proper authorities as required by state or local law. The District Superintendent will take responsibility and act according to established rules of *The Book of Discipline* with respect to claims against a pastor. If the District Superintendent is not available, the incident should be reported to the Bishop's office in Lakeland at (800) 282-8011, ext 150.

- D. After having reported the suspected abuse to the proper authorities, the appointed clergy is to report the incident immediately to the District Superintendent. If the District Superintendent is unavailable, the incident should be reported to the Bishop's office.
- E. The clergy or appointee will promptly notify the parents of the victim and take whatever steps are necessary to assure the safety and well being of the child or youth until the parent(s) arrive. **NOTE:** If one or both of the parents is the alleged abuser, follow the advice of the authorities concerning notification of others.
- F. Take all allegations seriously and reach out to the victim and the victim's family. Show care and support to help prevent further hurt. Extend whatever pastoral resources are needed. Remember that the care and safety of the victim is the **first** priority. Respond in a positive and supportive manner to the victim and the victim's family.
- G. The incident shall be kept confidential, yet the church should provide a supportive atmosphere to all those who are affected, offering both objectivity and empathy as it seeks to create a climate in which healing can take place.
- H. Keep a written report of the steps taken by the Church in response to the reported abuse. (Appendix IV). The report should be brief and contain only factual information relevant to the situation. It should be kept in a secure and confidential place. It should be written in ink or typed to prevent it from being changed.
- I. Any contact with the media should be handled by a **pre-determined** spokesperson identified by the senior pastor. (The Conference Office Risk Manager can assist in communication with the media.) The church spokesperson should generally convey a spirit of concern for the spiritual, physical, and emotional wellbeing of all who are affected, and that the matter is being diligently and appropriately handled.

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APPENDIX I

AUTHORIZATION AND REQUEST FOR CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK

I, _____, HEREBY AUTHORIZE the Saint Paul's United Methodist Church of Tallahassee, Florida to request any local, state or federal law enforcement department or agency to release information regarding any record of any investigations, charges or convictions contained in its files, or in any criminal file maintained on me, whether said file is a local, state, or national file, and including but not limited to accusations and convictions for crimes committed, against minors, to the fullest extent permitted by local, state and federal law. I release any and all law enforcement departments, agencies, and their employees from all liability that may result from any such disclosure made in response to this request. I also give my permission for this information to be shared with those persons who will participate in making decisions with respect to my application.

You are authorized to rely upon a photocopy or fax copy of this document.

Signature of Applicant Date

Print applicant's full name: _____
Print all other names that have been used by applicant (if any): _____

Date of birth: _____ Place of birth: _____

Social Security number : _____

Driver's license number: _____

State in which license was issued: _____

License expiration date: _____

=====**Below for Office Use**=====

Request sent to: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

APPENDIX II

PARTICIPATION COVENANT STATEMENT

The congregation of Saint Paul's United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, paid staff, and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church.

I _____ have read and understand the policy and procedures contained in this manual and agree to observe and abide by them. I also agree to discipline in an appropriate way, timely report child abuse and ensure that I am up to date on any training and screening required of me.

Signature of Applicant or Volunteer Date

SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

APPENDIX III

2 pages

ST. PAUL'S UMC PARENTAL CONSENT, PHOTO RELEASE & MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION

Name of child/youth: _____ Grade: _____ Age: _____

Mailing Address: _____
Street/Apt Number _____ City _____ Zip code _____

Parent/Guardian Daytime Phone #: _____ Evening Phone #: _____

Parent/Guardian Cell Phone # _____ E-Mail: _____

Alternate Contact Name & Relationship to child/youth: _____

Alternate contact daytime phone # _____ Evening Phone # _____

Cell Phone # _____ E-Mail: _____

Please indicate any restrictions on your child's/youth's activities:

_____ My child/youth is physically fit & has the necessary skills to safely participate.

_____ My child/youth has restrictions on the activities: _____

_____ My child has the following known allergies: _____

_____ My child has the following health condition: _____

_____ I also understand and give consent for my child to travel to and from these events in transportation provided by volunteer drivers.

I do _____ do not _____ give permission for St. Paul's United Methodist Church to use my child/youth's name and image on the church website; church directory; church posters or any and all media for church purposes

continued to next page =====>

SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

MEDICAL TREATMENT AUTHORIZATION

It is my understanding that the church will attempt to notify me in case of a medical emergency involving my child/youth. If the church cannot reach me, then I authorize the church to hire a doctor or health-care professional, and I give my permission to the doctor or other health-care professional, to provide the medical services he or she may deem necessary. I will pay for any medical expenses so incurred.

I will notify the church if I feel there are any health considerations that would prevent my child/youth’s participation in any of the activities listed above.

Insurance Company: _____ Policy/Group # _____

Child/Youth physician: _____ phone # _____

As the parent (or legal guardian) of: _____
Child/Youth’s Name

*I understand that my child/youth will be participating in a number of activities for **the calendar year** _____, which carry with them a certain degree of risk. Some of the activities are swimming, boating, hiking, camping, field trips, sports and other activities that the church may offer. I consent for my child/youth to participate in these activities.*

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian _____
Sign in the presence of the notary

State of Florida
County of Leon

I hereby certify that on this day, before me, an officer duly authorized to administer oaths and take acknowledgments, personally appeared _____ who is personally known or produced _____ as identification and (s)he did not take an oath.

Witness my hand and official seal in the County and State last aforesaid this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Notary Signature

SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

APPENDIX IV

Child\Youth Protection Incident or Abuse Report Form *

Reason for report: _____suspected non-church related abuse:
_____violation of CYPP policy _____suspected church related abuse

Date-of-incident: _____ Time:_____

Place of incident: _____

Name of reporter: _____ Title: _____

Name(s) of Child(ren)/Youth involved: _____ Age(s): _____

Briefly describe what happened (continue on back, if necessary):

Were there any witnesses? ___Yes/ No ___ If Yes, list name of each person on back.

What action taken & by whom?

Has the incident been resolved?: ___ Yes ___ No If Yes, how?:

What St. Paul's UMC policy or procedure was violated, if any?

Have the following people been notified? If so, indicate the name or jurisdiction of the entity contacted:

Pastor	_____	Bishop's Office	_____
Parent	_____	Police	_____
Staff-Parish Chairperson	_____	Sheriff	_____
District Superintendent	_____	Other	_____

Signature of reporter: _____ Date: _____

Report submitted to Pastor _____ on Date: _____

* This is NOT an accident report form.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

Appendix V

Emergency Contact Information (shall be located in each classroom, Sanders Hall, Kitchen, Office)

911 – FOR ALL TRUE MEDICAL OR OTHER EMERGENCIES

For after hour EMERGENCIES call a number below, otherwise call the church office at: 850-385-5146 and press "#1" for pastoral emergency number.

Appointed clergy and pastors:

Clarke Campbell-Evans	850-766-0054
Nathan Adams	386-748-3130
Sally Campbell-Evans	850-766-0018

Director of Children Ministries:

Jill Merryday	850-443-9428
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Director of Youth Ministries:

Stephanie Chandler	850-284-6148
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District Superintendent:	850-386-2054
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Florida Conference Bishop's Office: 1-800-282-8011, ext. 150

NOTE: Under these circumstances, the bishop's office will determine the appropriate time to contact the Risk Management Office of the Conference.

Tallahassee Police Department:	850-891-4200
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Leon County Sheriff's Department:	850-922-2300
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Leon County Child Abuse Reporting:	1-800-96-ABUSE
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Florida Child Abuse Hotline:	1-800-962-2873
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UMC Florida Conference Communications / Media Office:	1-407-897-1140
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SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

Appendix VI

DRIVER APPROVAL FORM

Full Name: _____

Home Address: _____

Mailing Address (if different from above): _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Cell phone _____

Driver's License # _____

State: _____ Expires _____

Restrictions on Driving: _____

Type of License: restricted under 18 regular CDL

I, _____, do hereby authorize
Saint Paul's United Methodist Church to conduct a motor vehicle records
search on this date _____

OFFICE USE ONLY:

Results///