

# Child / Youth Safety Policy

A congregational process



Church Leadership  
Development Day

February 11, 2017 (rev.)

Presbytery of Genesee Valley

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What keeps children and youth safe, ultimately, is not a policy and a set of procedures, regardless of how carefully crafted and honored in practice.

A policy is but one part of a **congregational culture** in which people, as disciples of Jesus Christ,

- care about children and youth,
- actively commit to their well-being,
- recognize risks,
- learn from experience,
- and hold each other accountable.



Do not place all responsibility on one person



Do engage the **whole** congregation.

(Jesus sent the disciples out together. Mark 6:7)



Do not simply copy  
another Session's policy.

Do honor God's  
unique call of mission  
and ministry to **your**  
congregation.



Like Job, you'll have a lot of comforters who will give you different opinions.



Do trust those with expertise who honor *best practices*.



# Getting started: A risk assessment tool

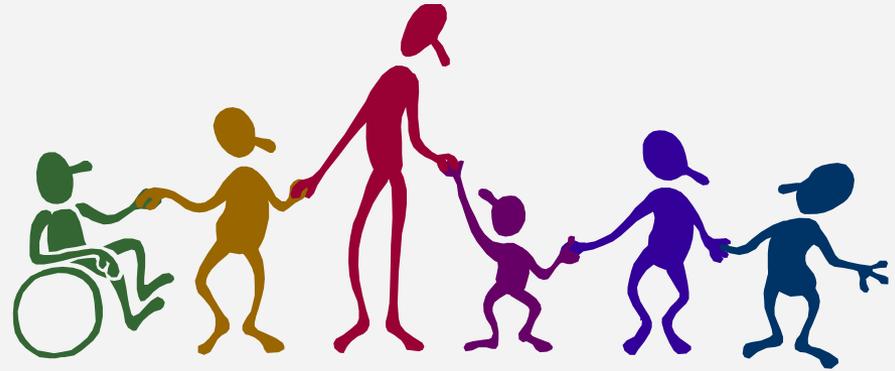


<i>12 months period</i>	Program	Activity	Event	Person
Interior space				
Exterior space				
Off-site				
Transporting				

Reach out.

Open conversations.

Talk & listen.



- Parents / guardians
- Youth
- Volunteers (Sunday School teachers, VBS staff, youth group chaperones)

This is a wonderful teachable moment.

Reach out.  
Seek those with good advice.



- Youth-serving organizations affiliated nationally: Boy / Girl Scouts, 4-H, YMCA...
- School, daycare center...
- Your insurance agent
- A school nurse, counselor, or social worker; police personnel who work with juveniles...

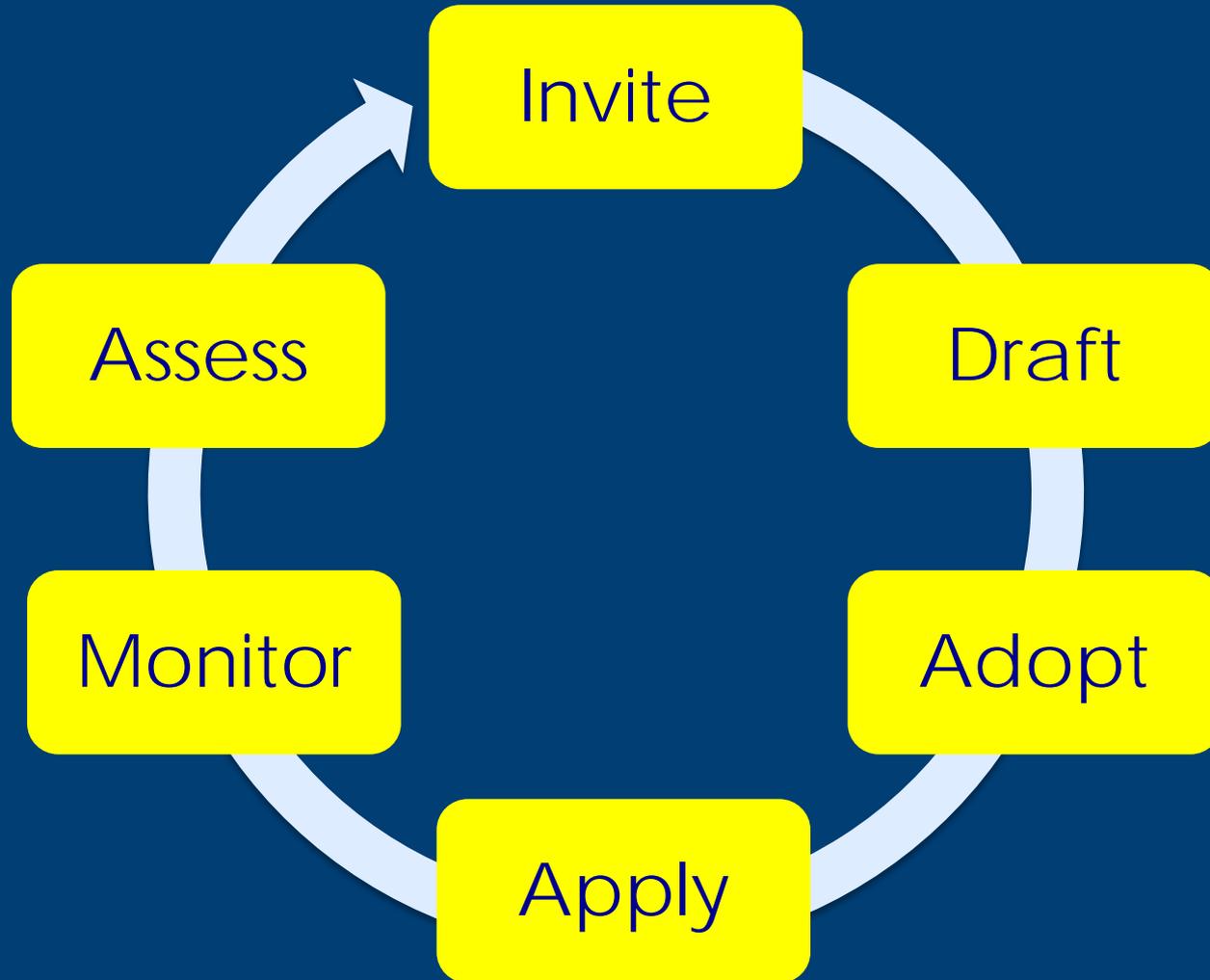
Trust those with expertise and experience.

For God's people, a policy functions as a guide through deep waters.



For a congregation, it's more than a set of rules. A policy is a living covenant.

# Trust the process, trust the Spirit



# The real test of your policy is the **outcome**

"You will know them by their **fruits**."

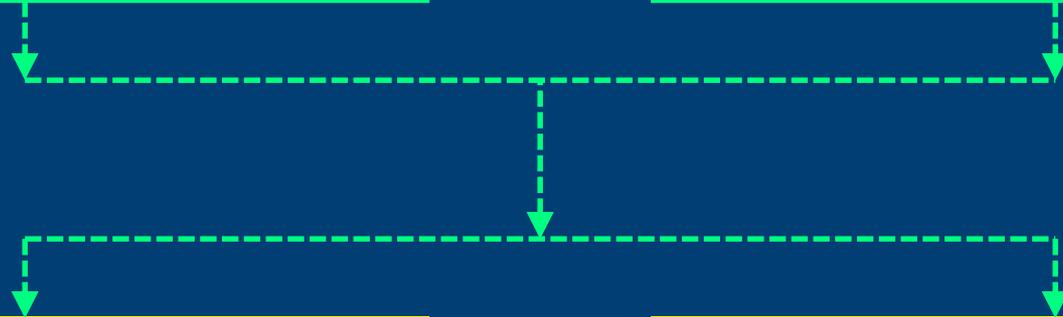
Jesus, on how to discern (Matthew 7:16)

Means of prevention is rules

Means of prevention is relationships

Outcome is a culture of safety & deterrence of harm

Outcome is a culture of risk & complicity



# Resources, Resources, Resources



Use the handout

*PGV Recommended Resources for a  
Session Child and Youth Safety Policy  
(02/11/17)*