

PRESBYTERY OF GENESEE VALLEY

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

CHILD AND YOUTH SAFETY POLICY

Adopted 5/23/17/ Revised 8/30/17

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I. Principles

We believe that fundamentally, we cannot serve God and disrespect or endanger children or youth. We proclaim that God created all life and following God must lead us to protect the vulnerable among us, particularly children. We also want our Presbytery to be a place where children and youth are able to grow in their faith and thrive, and parents are supported with safe, high-quality childcare at our Presbytery's events.

We also believe that many churches are already setting high standards of quality programming for children and youth, from nursery care to teenage mission trips. This policy seeks to make explicit standards of care which are already present and ensure that these standards are maintained at all Presbytery events with children. This policy also requires that any concerns of maltreatment will be treated seriously and given the consideration they deserve.

We hope that this policy will help parents, pastors, and youth leaders from our churches be more comfortable participating in Presbytery events, and encourage individual churches to provide the same high standard of safety in their own ministry context.

II. Purpose

This policy is intended to:

1. Make clear the safe and appropriate practices for adults leading activities with children and youth on behalf of the Presbytery.
2. Safeguard children participating in Presbytery of Genesee Valley sponsored or co-sponsored activities against any maltreatment.
3. Obtain justice in the event of any maltreatment.
4. Explain clearly to parents, guardians, and church leaders the steps taken for children's safety during Presbytery sponsored or co-sponsored events.
5. Reinforce the bonds of fiduciary trust between Presbytery leaders and the children they care for and educate.
6. Comply with the *Book of Order* provision G-3.0106 which mandates each council adopt and implement a child and youth safety policy, and with G-4.0302 regarding Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)-mandated reporting of abuse.
7. Exercise wise and prudent risk management and fulfill our fiduciary responsibility as stewards of the Presbytery as a not-for-profit corporation under New York State law.

III. Glossary

01. **accidental injury** is an unintentional injury/wound requiring the administration of first-aid and/or treatment by a licensed medical provider, e.g., cut, allergenic insect sting, broken bone, or burn.
02. **child** refers to any person under the age of 18.

03. **child care provider** refers to any person who provides child care during a Presbytery sponsored or co-sponsored event such as a meeting or educational event.
04. **corporal punishment** is the use of physical force (including spanking) which results in a child being hit or struck by a person who is not the child's parent or guardian and is in a position of authority or responsibility at a Presbytery-sponsored event.
05. **employee** refers to individuals who are hired or called by the Presbytery to work for salary or wages.
06. **maltreatment** refers to an act, or failure to act (neglect) which:
- creates a substantial risk of imminent physical, mental or emotional injury or harm;
 - causes physical, mental or emotional injury or harm;
 - endangers the welfare of a child; or
 - constitutes sexual abuse of a child.
07. **organizer** refers to any person who plans a Presbytery sponsored or co-sponsored activity or event which includes children, whether as an employee or volunteer. Although these people might not directly come into contact with children, they are responsible for ensuring that all Supervisors who lead Presbytery activities or events involving children are aware of and abide by this policy.
08. **presbytery sponsored** refers to any activity, program or event involving children which is planned, organized and/or conducted by the Presbytery or any of its officers, staff members, committees or boards.
09. **presbytery co-sponsored** refers to any activity, program or event involving children in which the Presbytery or any of its officers, staff members, committees or boards participates in the planning, organization and/or conduct of such activity, program or event with another entity. **This policy does not apply to any activity, program or event, including Neighborhood activities, for which the Presbytery provides only publicity or funding.**
10. **supervisor** refers to any person who is leading a Presbytery sponsored or co-sponsored activity or event involving children, whether an employee or volunteer. A Supervisor is responsible for the health, safety, education, and wellbeing of the children participating in the activity or attending the event.
11. **volunteer** refers to any person who provides services to the Presbytery and receives no remuneration or monetary benefits. Volunteers include persons elected or appointed to serve on Presbytery boards, committees, and other groups.

IV. Scope

- A. This policy applies only to events, activities, or programs involving children which are sponsored or co-sponsored by the Presbytery. This includes, but is not limited to, the Presbytery's Triennium delegation, childcare at Church Leadership Development Day and Presbytery meetings, and Mission Day.
- B. This policy applies to: people who plan, organize, or lead any Presbytery-sponsored or co-sponsored event involving children; Supervisors and Child Care Providers at the events; parents whose children attend the event; staff of the Presbytery (employees or volunteers); and members of the Presbytery.
- C. In the case of activities, events, or programs involving children which are Presbytery co-sponsored, the Presbytery (or its applicable officer, staff member committee or board) shall advise the other organization or group of this policy, and that the Presbytery will require, as a condition of its co-sponsorship, that this policy be observed, except to the extent that the other organization or group may have a similar policy which is more restrictive or which is designed to address the specific or unique circumstances of the location in which such activity, event or program is conducted.
- D. This policy shall be reviewed by the Council every three years, with any needed revisions recommended to Presbytery.

V. Practices

The following practices are measures to be applied to ensure child safety and eliminate opportunities for maltreatment of children and youth during Presbytery sponsored or co-sponsored events.

1. At no point shall an adult be alone with an unrelated child, including during transportation in a vehicle or using the bathroom. Ways to permit confidentiality and privacy without sacrificing safety are listed in V. Practices 6.
2. At least one Child Care Provider present must be 23 years of age or older.
3. There will be no more than five children to each Child Care Provider for children under 10 (Child Care Providers may include teens, as long as there is a five-year age difference). There may be eight children to each Child Care Provider for children between 10 and 18.
4. The Supervisor is responsible for informing parents and guardians of the room, area, or location in which their children will be supervised.
5. All indoor activity rooms or areas must have doors with windows, dutch doors, or doors must be left open. Window shades and/or doors are to be open whenever possible. Anyone passing an activity room must be able to see into the room at all times.
6. Confidential discussions with minors shall be conducted with open doors or a door with a clear window, at times when other adults will be nearby and aware.

7. Supervisors and Child Care Providers are responsible for ensuring that proper safety guidelines are followed during activities (helmets during a bike ride, gloves during construction service project, etc).
8. If medication could or will be needed during a Presbytery sponsored or co-sponsored event, parents must fill out the Medication Form (see Attachment C). Supervisors will dispense medication as directed according to the Medication Form. Supervisors will keep any medication provided by parents in a safe place inaccessible to other children or youth.
9. For any Presbytery-sponsored or co-sponsored event which is overnight or conducted outside of the Presbytery's physical boundaries (such as travel to and from Triennium), the Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that a complete Medical Information Form (Attachment D) has been received in advance for each participating child.
10. Medical Information and Medication Forms (Attachments C and D) shall be accessible to Supervisors and Child Care Providers during the event, and shall be destroyed afterwards.
11. No children or youth will possess, or have access to, illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or weapons. In the event of non-compliance, the offending child may be sent home at their family's expense.
12. There shall be no one-on-one online contact or text messaging between a Supervisor or Child Care Provider and a minor. Public methods of communication are encouraged such as including a parent, sibling, or other child on any message.
13. Technology will not be used to bully others or view or send explicit violent, sexual, or obscene material, either by children, youth, Supervisors, or Child Care Providers. In the event of non-compliance, the offending child may be sent home at their family's expense.
14. Any act of maltreatment of a child or youth entrusted to our care, whether it is committed by an adult or minor, is strictly prohibited.
15. A first aid kit must be accessible to Supervisors or Child Care Providers at all times.
16. No photographs of anyone under the age of 18 shall be published by the Presbytery without written permission from parents.
17. Any act of corporal punishment as a means to discipline, correct, or control a child entrusted to our care is strictly prohibited.
18. In the event of any overnight activity involving children or youth, adult Supervisors who stay overnight must provide written documentation of a basic background check conducted within the past three years by Praesidium, Inc. (praesidium.com) or an organization recommended by the PC(USA).
19. If transportation during a Presbytery sponsored or co-sponsored program, event or activity is provided, the Event Organizer shall take appropriate steps to ensure that the vehicle operators are at least 20 years of age and have valid drivers' licenses, and that the vehicles have valid registrations and insurance.
20. This policy shall be implemented as follows for all Presbytery-sponsored or co-sponsored events involving children:
 - a. This policy and the supplemental "Child and Youth Safety Resources" document shall be distributed by the Event Organizer to all people who plan and lead such events, including Supervisors and Child Care Providers. Written acknowledgement of receipt shall be required (see Attachment B, "Acknowledgement of Receipt"). Acknowledgement forms

will be kept either digitally or in hard copy by the Presbytery for three years after the event and then destroyed.

- b. Event Organizers are responsible for distributing this policy, collecting signed acknowledgements from Supervisors and Child Care Providers and making available a hard copy of the policy on site.
 - c. Event Organizers are responsible for collecting Childcare Registration Forms for Presbytery-Sponsored Childcare from parents (see Child and Youth Safety Resources document) prior to Presbytery sponsored or co-sponsored events with childcare. Event Organizers are responsible for making them available to Child Care Providers during the event. These forms will be kept on file electronically at the Presbytery office for three years and then destroyed. Parents are responsible for ensuring that these forms stay up to date.
21. Before the Presbytery commits to co-sponsoring an event involving children with another organization or group, the Event Organizer shall obtain a completed and signed copy of "Co-Sponsor's Agreement to Observe PGV Child and Youth Safety Policy" (Attachment E) as a condition of the Presbytery's co-sponsorship.

VI. Intervention Procedures

The following procedures require the response of any Supervisors, Child Care Providers, or Event Organizers upon discovery, or receipt of either a verbal report or a written allegation, of any accidental injury to or maltreatment of children.

A. In the event of any accidental injury

1. Emergency medical treatment shall be administered as needed, in the determination of a Supervisor or Child Care Provider.
2. Child Care Providers shall immediately notify a Supervisor.
3. The Supervisor shall immediately notify the child's parents or guardians of any case of injury requiring medical treatment.
4. The Supervisor shall immediately notify the Event Organizer of any case of injury requiring medical treatment.

B. In the event of any maltreatment

1. If a Supervisor, Child Care Provider, or Event Organizer discovers or has a reasonable concern that a child may be in danger or abused in another context, they shall contact the NY State Child Abuse Hotline (see Attachment A, "Resources for Reporting Maltreatment Of Children").

2. If there is a reasonable concern that a child was maltreated during a Presbytery-sponsored or co-sponsored event, activity, or program, whether by an adult or another child, the following shall apply:
 - a. Emergency medical treatment shall be administered as needed, in the determination of a Supervisor or Child Care Provider.
 - b. Child Care Providers shall immediately notify a Supervisor.
 - c. The Supervisor shall immediately notify the child's parents or guardians of any case of maltreatment.
 - d. The Supervisor or Event Organizer if present shall notify the NY State Child Abuse Hotline immediately (see Attachment A, "Resources for Reporting Maltreatment Of Children").
 - e. The Supervisor shall immediately notify the Event Organizer of any case of maltreatment.

C. Violation of Policy by a Supervisor or Child Care Provider

1. If any items in the "Practices" section of this policy are violated by Supervisors or Child Care Providers, they may be sent home immediately at their own cost and replacements may be found as needed. Parents of children at the event will be notified of the change immediately.

D. Violation of Policy by a Child or Youth

1. If any items in the "Practices" section of this policy are violated by a child or youth (e.g., #11, #13, or #14), they may be sent home immediately at their own cost.

E. Post-event action after accidental injury or an allegation of maltreatment of children

1. The Supervisor of an event shall submit a written report to Event Organizers after any allegation of maltreatment or accidental injury. In the instance of any submission of written information involving a minor, the person who receives the report shall promptly inform the Presbytery Leader, the Presbytery insurance carrier, and the Presbytery attorney. Disclosure to civil authorities is required if there is an allegation that an illegal action (such as child abuse or neglect) has occurred (see Attachment A, "Resources for Reporting Maltreatment Of Children").
2. The Presbytery Leader will disclose in writing to an affected congregation's pastor the basic facts following receipt of a written report regarding an allegation of maltreatment of children. Disclosure will be truthful, recognize concerns for confidentiality, and respect formal investigations.

Attachment A.**Resources for Reporting Maltreatment of Children**

In the case of a reasonable concern that a child may have been maltreated, harmed, or is in danger, immediately call the NY State Child Abuse Hotline at **1-800-342-3720** (24 hours/day, 7 days/week).

If you are uncertain about calling the civil authorities, you may review the situation with trained human services providers at a resource below (information was updated 08/28/17).

1. During standard business hours, Monday-Friday, If your concern regards a child in:

Monroe County
Bivona Child Advocacy Center 585-935-7800 Rochester

Genesee, Livingston, Orleans, or Wyoming County
Justice for Children Child Advocacy Center 585-344-8576 Batavia (satellites to open in Albion & Warsaw, 2017)

Ontario County
Child Advocacy Center of the Finger Lakes 585-394-2573 Canandaigua (satellite office in Geneva)

2. 24 hours/day & 7 days/week, If your concern regards a child in:

Livingston, Monroe, or Ontario County
Lifeline (Finger Lakes Region) 211 or 585-275-5151

Genesee or Orleans County
Care and Crisis Helpline 1-844-345-4440 or 585-344-4440 (based at YWCA, Batavia)

Genesee, Orleans, or Wyoming County
2-1-1 WNY 211 or 1-888-696-9211 (based at Olmsted Center for Sight, Buffalo)

3. 24 hours/day & 7 days/week, for any congregation in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

Abuse Prevention Helpline 1-866-607-7233 (SAFE) Staffed by Praesidium, Inc. (based in Arlington, Texas)

For information regarding the Abuse Prevention Helpline and other services available to PC(U.S.A.) congregations: https://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/Is-Your-Church-Safe-Brochure.pdf

Attachment C.

Medication Form

Name of child: _____

Medications provided by parent:

Circumstances in which medication should be administered:

Directions for administering medication (puffs/use, taken with food, etc)

Does this medication require any special storage? _____

Is your child able to administer their own medication? _____

Do you want to be contacted if this medication is used? _____

I agree that event Supervisors and/or Child Care Providers may administer this medication to my child in the manner described above.

Signature Printed Name Date

Attachment D.

Medical Information Form

(for overnights or activities outside of the Presbytery’s boundaries)

Participant Information

Name _____

Primary Physician _____ Phone _____

Dentist _____ Phone _____

Special Medical Conditions _____

Date of last tetanus shot _____

Ongoing medications (name and times/circumstances administered)

Allergies (medicine, food, insects, etc.)

Health Insurance Company _____

Policy Number _____

Other information that you would like for us to know:

(over)

Emergency Contact Information

Parent 1 Name _____

Home Phone Number _____ Work Phone Number _____

Cell Phone Number _____

Parent 2 Name _____

Home Phone Number _____ Work Phone Number _____

Cell Phone Number _____

Other Emergency Contact Name _____

Relationship to Youth _____

Home Phone Number _____ Work Phone Number _____

Cell Phone Number _____

Attachment E**Co-Sponsor's Agreement to Observe PGV Child and Youth Safety Policy**

I hereby acknowledge that, as an authorized representative of _____
 _____ (*name of organization or group**), I received a copy of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley's
 Child and Youth Safety Policy, and the Child and Youth Safety Resources document, as of the date
 indicated below. I have read the policy, understand its meaning and intent, and understand and
 acknowledge that the observance of this policy is a condition of the co-sponsorship by the
 Presbytery of the activity, program or event as identified below, and agree that such policy will be
 observed, except to the extent that the this organization or group uses a similar policy containing
 practices which are better suited for achieving Presbyter's Section II. Purpose. If our organization
 or group's policy will be used, I have attached a copy to this form, and indicated which of our
 specific portions will apply.

Signature

Name

Name of Organization or Group*

Date

Name of Activity, Program or Event

Phone Number

Email

*[*includes individual churches, presbyteries and synods, or other independent religious,
 charitable, educational or not-for-profit organization or group.]*