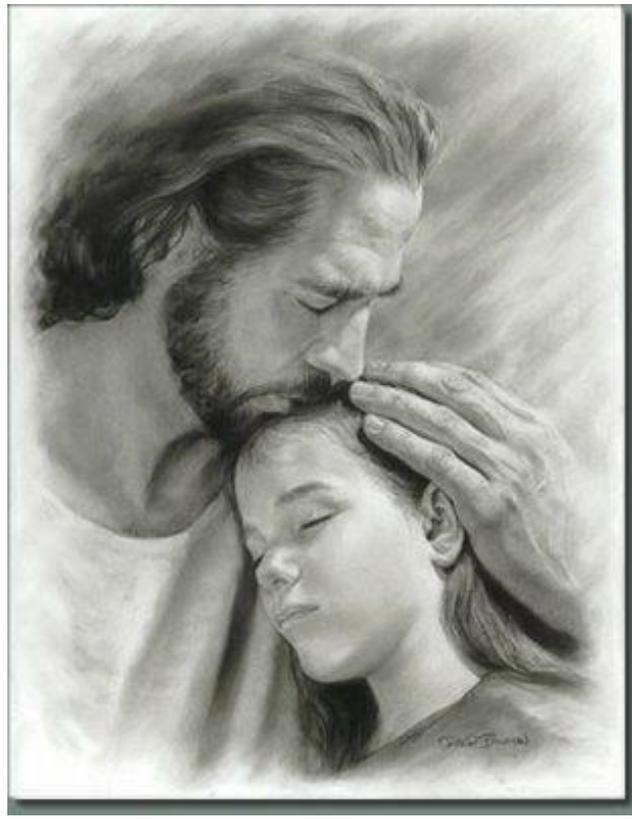


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**CHILD
PROTECTION STANDARDS
FOR
Stout Memorial UMC**

Adopted by the Administrative Board of SMUMC

REVISED – OCTOBER 2018



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TABLE OF CONTENTS
CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

STATEMENT OF COVENANT

CONCLUSION

PROCEDURES TO SUPPORT THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

- I. DEFINITIONS
 - a. ABUSE
 - b. AGE GROUPS
 - c. STAFF/VOLUNTEER
- II. LOCAL CHURCH CHILD PROTECTION STANDARDS COORDINATOR
- III. SELECTION AND SCREENING
- IV. SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH
- V. RESPONSIBILITY OF ADULT WORKERS OUTSIDE OF EVENTS
- VI. RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE
- VII. EDUCATION OF WORKERS
- VIII. CYBER SAFETY AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS
- IX. RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING ABUSE

APPENDIX 1 – BACKGROUND CHECK FORM

APPENDIX 2- COVENANT

APPENDIX 3- APPLICANT INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

APPENDIX 4 – SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

APPENDIX 5-STOUT MEMORIAL UMC REPORT OF SUSPECTED INCIDENT OF CHILD/YOUTH ABUSE
AT CHURCH SPONSORED EVENTS

APPENDIX 6-APPLICATION TO WORK/VOLUNTEER WITH CHILDREN/YOUTH

APPENDIX 7-REFERENCE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR APPLICANT TO WORK/VOLUNTEER WITH
CHILDREN OR YOUTH

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CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES For Stout Memorial UMC

Introduction

“People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them, and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, ‘Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly, I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.’ And he took them in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.” (Mark 10:13-16)

This incident from the ministry of Jesus speaks of the value our Lord placed on children and the example of faith that they provide for the rest of us. As followers of Jesus, we understand that children/youth are inherently valuable members of Christ’s community.

Jesus highlighted not only the faith and openness of children, but also their vulnerability. This vulnerability puts children at risk, but it also places them close to God. Their dependence on God may be what Jesus was trying to get his disciples to see as a model of their own faith. This vulnerability and dependence make the protection and support of the community of faith even more important. Jesus was teaching that, within the community of believers, there must be protection for each of us in our dependence on God and each other. As followers of Christ, we resolve to protect children and also learn from them as we all grow in the faith.

Physical contact with children/youth in our programs is healthy and affirming. However, we recognize that all hugging, touching and close physical contact carries an implied risk in our culture. Physical contact of any nature should be carefully controlled to demonstrate only respect and Christian concern for any of our children/youth.

Our culture appears to be experiencing an increase in the incidence of child abuse and neglect. As much as we do not like to think about abusive and hurtful things happening in the church, it is clear that it is our duty as the Church to guard and protect the children, youth, church staff, and volunteers who participate in our ministries.

The General Conference of The United Methodist Church, in April 1996, adopted a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of child sexual abuse in the church. The adopted resolution includes the following statement:

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 state that “...children must be protected from economic, physical and sexual exploitation and abuse.”

God calls us to make churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from sexual and ritual abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong. (from *The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church - 1996*. [pp. 384386])

Thus, in covenant with all United Methodists, we adopt this policy for the protection of our children and those who work with them in our annual conference.

Purpose

Our local church’s purpose for maintaining this Child Protection Policy is to demonstrate our commitment to the safety and spiritual growth of all our children and youth.

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By maintaining these policies and procedures, we demonstrate our commitment in several ways:

1. We cultivate an environment which fosters safe relationships among our children/youth and their adult workers;
2. We establish the minimum standards required for local church by the WV Annual Conference Child Protection Policies;
3. We raise the issue of child protection.

Through the conference Sexual Ethics Team:

4. We provide the required training for the adults who work with children and youth.
5. We maintain a process for application, screening, and training records for adult workers with children/youth.

Statement of Covenant

Therefore, as a Christian community of faith, we pledge to conduct the ministry of the gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of all of our children and youth at Stout Memorial UMC, as well as those who work with our children and youth. In support of this covenant, we will:

- ⊕ Encourage the development and implementation of reasonable procedures specifically designed to protect children, youth, staff, and volunteers associated with activities of the church;
- ⊕ Encourage the establishment of appropriate ways of responding to alleged, reported, or suspected incidents of abuse in a fair and compassionate manner;
- ⊕ Be available to provide in a compassionate ministry with all affected persons: the alleged victim, the alleged victim's family, the accused, the accused family, and the church family; and

Conclusion

In all of our ministries with children and youth, this church, Stout Memorial UMC, is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ at all levels of the Church so that each child/youth will be "...surrounded by steadfast love,...established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal." (Baptismal Covenant II, *United Methodist Hymnal*, p. 44)

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**PROCEDURES TO SUPPORT THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY
OF STOUT MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

I. Definitions

A. Abuse

Child abuse is a broad term encompassing a variety of acts perpetrated against a child/youth by an adult or significantly older or more powerful youth or child that results in intentional harm to the child/youth, or that negligently endangers a child's/youth's health, safety or welfare. The child/youth victim is never capable of consenting to abusive behavior, either legally or morally. In all circumstances, child abuse is morally wrong and the victim shares no responsibility for the abuse. Persons having greater power or authority than the child/youth victim, and who misuse that power or authority to harm the child/youth physically, sexually or emotionally, perpetrate child abuse.

Our churches must be the safest and holiest of places for all of God's children/youth if we are to succeed in our efforts to live and serve as the Body of Christ in the world.

While it would be impossible to form an exhaustive list of actions constituting child abuse, the following definitions and examples serve as a guideline for the purposes of this policy:

- 1) Physical Abuse – Abuse in which a person deliberately and intentionally causes bodily harm to a child/youth. Examples may include violent battery with a weapon (knife, belt, strap, paddle, etc.), burning, shaking, kicking, choking, fracturing bones, and any of a wide variety of non-accidental injuries to a child's/youth's body.
- 2) Emotional Abuse – Abuse in which a person exposes a child/youth to spoken and/or unspoken violence or emotional cruelty. Emotional abuse sends a message to the child/youth of worthlessness, badness, and being not only unloved but undeserving of love and care. Children/youth exposed to emotional abuse may experience being locked in a closet, being deprived of any sign of parental affection, being constantly told they are bad or stupid, or being allowed or forced to abuse alcohol or drugs. Emotional abuse is often very difficult to prove, and it is devastating to the victim.
- 3) Neglect – Abuse in which a person endangers a child's/youth's health, safety, or welfare through negligence. Neglect may include withholding meals, clothing, medical care, education, and even affection and affirmation of the child's/youth's self-worth. This is perhaps the most common form of abuse.
- 4) Sexual Abuse – Child sexual abuse is a criminal act perpetrated by an adult (or an older and more powerful youth) that exploits and harms children/youth by exposing them to or involving them in sexual behavior for which they are unprepared, to which they cannot consent (either morally or legally), and from which they are unable to protect themselves. The child/youth victim is never capable of consenting to abusive behavior, and cannot be blamed for the abuse regardless of the child's/youth's conduct. Examples of sexual abuse may include fondling, intercourse, incest, and the exploitation of the child/youth for the purpose of or exposure of the child/youth to pornography or prostitution.

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- 5) Hazing/Initiations/Bullying – Abuse that occurs when the child/youth is subjected to ridicule, harassment, or other emotional or physical harm as part of a rite of passage, initiation, punishment, or for the enjoyment of the participants or other bystanders. This type of abuse may be perpetrated by adults or by older or more powerful children or youth. While this type of abuse may not always constitute a crime, it serves no purpose in the Body of Christ and is not acceptable in our church.

B. Age Groups

The *Book of Discipline* helps us provide the following definitions:

Youth - “all persons from approximately 12 through 18 years of age (generally persons in the seventh grade through the twelfth grade, taking into account the grouping of youth in the public schools)”

Adult - persons 18 years of age and older

Child - persons up to “approximately 12 years of age (generally persons from birth through the sixth grade, taking into account the grouping of youth in the public schools)”

For the purposes of this document, there need be no distinction between “child” and “youth.”

C. C. Staff/Volunteer

- 1) Church Staff - any person in the employ of Stout Memorial UMC in a professional, program, support, or other position or a volunteer elected to a position of “Coordinator” or “President” (e.g. Youth Coordinator, UMW President)
- 2) Event Staff - a person in any position of responsibility at an event sponsored by Stout Memorial UMC, or any person who takes instruction and direction from a church staff person or another event staff person at such an event.

II. Local Church Child Protection Standards Coordinator

In order for our church, Stout Memorial UMC, to comply with the Conference Child Protection Standards, our Minister of Family Ministries will serve as our church Child Protection Coordinator (CPC). This person will be identified on the annual Charge Conference Form. The CPC will oversee the development and implementation of the congregation’s Child Protection Standards. The CPC will be trained by the Conference Sexual Ethics Team. This training, and a background check, will be renewed every 5 years.

The CPC will have three functions:

1. Collecting, processing and maintaining information on those who volunteer to work with children and youth at Stout Memorial UMC.
2. Educating staff, volunteers and event leaders in our Child Protection Standards and those of the WV Annual Conference where applicable.

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3. Monitoring any or all events, where children and/or youth are present and that take place at Stout Memorial UMC, to assure compliance with our Child Protection Standards.

III. Selection and Screening of Staff and Volunteers

Although our Christian concern for children/youth leads us to be saddened when any form of child abuse takes place anywhere, our major policy need is to be certain that abuse does not occur within the framework of any church program or ministry with children/youth. These policies and procedures are intended to help make safe and care-filled environments for church-sponsored events.

1. Each person being considered to volunteer to work with children/youth shall fill out a background check form and covenant.
2. Before approving a volunteer, the CPC has the discretion to conduct an interview with the potential volunteer, as well as to ask for and require 3 references. Indications that an interview must take place may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Potential volunteer is new to the event or position in the event.
 - b. Potential volunteer is new (less than 5 years) to Stout Memorial UMC.
 - c. Evidence indicates that the potential volunteer has been charged with a crime against children or youth.
 - d. The potential volunteer, or their references, raise issues that require clarification.
3. Interviews will follow the interview guidelines attached to this document (Appendixes 3 & 4) and be conducted by the CPC and/or Senior Pastor.
4. The results of the interview, especially when sensitive areas have been discussed, should be kept confidential and disclosed only to those persons requiring this information in order to make a decision as to whether the applicant should be accepted for this or any other ministry/event of Stout Memorial UMC.
5. Covenant Statement
 - a. Before beginning work with either children or youth, each staff or volunteer will sign a statement (Appendix 2) that they have read, understand and agree to abide by the Child Protection Standards of Stout Memorial UMC.
 - b. Such a signed statement is required of all persons and is prerequisite to beginning work at any event.

In the unfortunate situation where it has been determined that an applicant should not work with children/youth, the agency will handle such a decision in a confidential manner which is sensitive to that person.

IV. Supervision of Children and Youth at Stout Memorial UMC Sponsored Meetings, Activities and Events

Two Adult Supervision - At least two non-cohabitating adults will be present for all activities involving children or youth. There are at least five reasons for this standard:

1. To assure that one adult is never alone with one child
2. To remove an opportunity for abusive situations
3. To remove an opportunity for false accusations of abuse
4. To provide support for leadership at the events
5. To provide sufficient leadership to deal with emergency situations

*****Exception: Doors with windows, or open doors, in high traffic areas may have 1 adult supervision. Ex: Education Wing during Sunday School time.

While recognizing the importance of developing youth leaders throughout the conference, we must also recognize that persons 18 and under are youth and not adults. Therefore, when youth assist with an activity, the youth may not be counted toward fulfilling the Two-Adult rule.

Co-ed Events - There will be at least two adults of each gender present at co-ed overnight events. At single gender overnight events, at least two of the two or more adults present will be of the same gender as the children/youth.

Transportation - The following standards will be followed when a conference/district agency is providing transportation to, from, or as a part of a conference/district sponsored event:

1 Driver must be at least 21 years old

- ⊕ Driver must have a valid US driver's license for the vehicle being operated
- ⊕ The vehicle must be insured. Driver must have proof of insurance in his/her possession
- ⊕ Driver must be accompanied by at least 2 children/youth and be part of a caravan with other vehicles or be accompanied by another adult
- ⊕ Driver must have read and signed the Participation Covenant Statement
- ⊕ Permission form from a parent or guardian must be obtained and include, but not limited to: medical information (i.e. allergies, medications, conditions, etc.), name of primary care physician and insurance company with policy number, phone number and address; as well as permission to treat in the event of any emergency. These forms will be kept with the leader of the event, and shared with only those who need the information as to treatment.

Open Door Policy - Parents, volunteers, staff and/or pastors of Stout Memorial UMC may visit and observe any part of the program at any time, including but not limited to, children and youth church ministries, Scouts, any outside group where children/youth are involved (i.e. sport teams).

Sensitive Areas - Leaders of a program should avoid being in sensitive areas such as bathrooms, shower areas, and changing rooms with participants. No leader will ever be the only adult in such areas when children/youth are present. If only one adult in a bathroom situation with a young child, stand with the foot propping open the door for communication, when necessary.

Housing - The following standards will be followed when Stout Memorial UMC is providing housing as a part of an SMUMC sponsored event:

- ⊕ Whenever sleeping arrangements are made, males and females will sleep in different areas (e.g., rooms, floors, cabins, etc.)
- ⊕ When necessary for unsupervised youth to sleep in a room, no more than two years of age may separate them.
- ⊕ Adults must keep an appropriate distance from children/youth sleeping near them
- ⊕ Whenever possible, separate bathrooms will be designated for each gender. When only one bathroom is available, privacy will be assured by means of a lock, a sign or designated time frames
- ⊕ Adults will not share a room with less than 4 children/youth

Medical Support - Leaders will know the location of the nearest medical facility and have telephone access to emergency medical assistance.

Hazing/Initiations/Bullying - Hazing is any situation where some are entertained at the emotional expense of another. This is sometimes intentional harassment and sometimes “innocent fun.” Both are abusive exercises of power which erode the self-esteem of the child/youth. Such abuse has no place in the program of the Church and must be avoided. Common examples of “innocent fun” hazing include: a “snipe” hunt, skits involving a victim, good-natured put downs, or secret organizations. Even when the “victim” agrees to the “joke,” we are modeling unacceptable behavior.

Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco/Swearing-Anyone found to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol at any children or youth meeting or event will be asked to leave the premises immediately. Anyone found in possession of illegal drugs will be asked to leave the premises immediately. Anyone found in possession of alcohol and/or tobacco will be asked to discard it, and will be given a warning that those items are prohibited at all children and youth meetings and events. Anyone heard to be swearing will be given a warning and told that that is unacceptable behavior for children and youth meetings and events

V. Responsibility of Adult Workers Outside Official Events

Recognizing that it is impossible to monitor relationships outside of events, adult workers are reminded that they are to be held accountable to the spirit of these policies in all their interactions with the children/youth of God’s Church.

VI. Response by Church Workers to Allegations of Abuse

As caring Christians, we are committed to protect and advocate for children/youth participating in the life of the church. The Church is entrusted to provide an emotionally safe, spiritually grounded, healthy environment for children, youth, and adults in which they are protected from abuse of any kind. It is our legal and moral responsibility to report suspected abuse whenever it comes to our attention regardless of where that suspected abuse takes place. We shall report suspected abuse to stop potentially existing

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abuse and to prevent further abuse. To report suspected abuse is to be a witness to the world of the love and justice of God. Reporting abuse is a form of ministering to the needs of those crying out for help or too weak to help themselves.

If abuse is suspected by, observed by, or disclosed to a volunteer and/or paid staff of the conference, that person shall report the incident immediately to the leader of the conference/district sponsored event as well as Child Protection Services and, in the instance of serious physical or sexual abuse, contact Law Enforcement.

If abuse occurs or is reported, it is our intention to act as an advocate for all affected persons, providing support, information, assistance, and intervention. We seek to provide a supportive atmosphere, offering both objectivity and empathy as we seek to create a climate in which healing can take place.

In the event of any suspected abuse or neglect, the reporter will do the following:

- Immediately separate the alleged perpetrator from contact with children and youth. Be careful to realize this is a precaution and not a presumption of guilt.
- Immediately separate the alleged victim from other children and youth in the program. Take whatever steps are necessary to assure the safety of the alleged victim until the parents or guardians arrive.
- Immediately notify the proper authorities, i.e., Children Protection Services, Department of Health and Human Services, local law enforcement, etc. This is a requirement of law. Do not attempt an investigation. This should be left to the professionals who are familiar with these cases.
- Report the incident to Stout Memorial UMC CPC and/or the Senior Pastor for advice and support in following procedures. The CPC or Senior Pastor will report the incident to the District Superintendent who shall contact the Conference Chancellor and follow appropriate steps from the Conference Crisis Response Plan. If the accused is a clergy member of the annual conference, local pastor, or diaconal minister, appropriate provisions of the *Book of Discipline* must be followed.
- Notify the parents or legal guardians of the alleged victim. It is important to emphasize that the authorities must be notified even if the parents do not wish the incident to be reported. (Note: if one or both of the parents or the legal guardian is the alleged abuser, contact the proper authorities and follow their advice on how to proceed.)
- Establish and maintain a written report of the basic information to ensure on-going ministry to, and advocacy for, the victims and others involved. Use the "Suspected Abuse Report" form (Appendix 5) for this report. The report shall be brief and contain only factual information relevant to the situation. It shall be written in ink or typed to prevent changes. It shall at all times be treated with the highest confidentiality. The report shall be filed in the Senior Pastor's office where it shall remain confidential.
- Contact with the media will be handled only by the Director of Communications as part of the Crisis Response Plan.
- Reach out to the alleged victim and his/her family as well as the accused with Christian compassion and pastoral care.

VII. Education of Workers

Stout Memorial UMC will provide access to Child Protection Standards Training approved by the WV Annual Conference once a year for all new ministry applicants and anyone who wants a refresher course. Re-certification training will be required at a minimum at every three years for all current staff and volunteers. Training will include, but not be limited to, the reality of child abuse, risk factors leading to child abuse, and strategies for prevention.

Persons successfully completing approved training will be issued a Certificate of Training noting date of completion, and will need to submit to a background check (required every 3 years)

VIII. Cyber Safety and Electronic Communication

The internet, apps, social media and portable devices allow people to stay in contact with each other more easily than at any other time in the history of civilization. Excellent ministry can take place using modern technology, but as with all forms of ministry, there are inherent risks involved with the use of electronic communications. **Assume anything and everything in cyberspace is public information.**

In addition to general permission to participate in a church ministry meetings or events, obtain written advance parent/legal guardian permission for children and youth to be used on Facebook and the Stout Memorial UMC website. When sharing pictures and videos to social media/website, refrain using last names of children and youth. Check to make sure that nametags are not distinguishable.

Do not use your personal social media presence for ministry. Use only the Stout Memorial Facebook page or website, that is monitored by senior leadership/CPC. Included will be a code of conduct/terms and conditions for the site that expressly states expectations for posts and a clear expression of how violations, offensive/objectionable material will be addressed. The sites will be monitored and any inappropriate comments, photos, links, etc. will be removed, and usage privileges may be revoked. Members/friends of the site will be monitored and may be restricted. Nothing will be posted that wouldn't be appropriate in the newspaper, bulletin or newsletter. Safe social media guidelines, and the dangers of usage, will be discussed yearly in youth meetings.

Do not collect online, or allow third parties to collect online, personal information from children under the age of 13. See Children's Online Privacy Protection Act ("COPPA") and Federal Trade Commission Rules implementing COPPA (the "Rule"). COPPA and the Rule require specific permissions and privacy policies if a website or online service collects, or allows third parties to collect, personal information if the service is directed to children under the age of 13. Restrictions also apply if the site is directed to a general audience and the organization has actual knowledge that it collects personal information from children under 13 years of age.

IX. Responding To and Reporting Abuse

A quick, compassionate, and unified response to an alleged or actual incident of abuse is necessary and expected. All allegations are to be taken seriously. In all cases of reported or observed abuse in a ministry event, the entire staff of that event, paid and/or volunteer, shall be at the service of all official investigating agencies.

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A mandated reporter must make a report of suspected child abuse. All members of the clergy, employees, child care workers, youth camp administrators or counselors, and volunteers who work with children/youth are mandated reporters.

The goal of an immediate response to alleged or known incidents of abuse will be to ensure the safety of the victim and any additional potential victims. In all cases of alleged or actual abuse, professional support is obtained by informing the Department of Human Resources- Bureau for Children and Families at 1-800-352-6513 **not more than 24 hours after suspecting this abuse or neglect. In any case where the reporter believes that the child suffered serious physical abuse or sexual abuse or sexual assault, the reporter shall also immediately report to the State Police and any law-enforcement agency having jurisdiction to investigate.** The parents/legal guardians of the victim will be notified unless they have been named as the alleged perpetrator of the abuse. Pastoral support is sought by following the church policy which is: If the allegation or incident concerns events or persons outside any relationship to a local church related event, it is the responsibility of the person who heard the abuse to make the initial report to the Department of Human Resources- Bureau for Children and Families. The procedures outlined in this section will provide guidance for responses and reporting.

Example: Child, youth telling a camp counselor about abuse by a relative during the prior year. If this report were made to the counselor in the course of his/her duties as a camp counselor, then it is the responsibility of the camp counselor to make the call to report. The camp counselor may talk with the Camp Dean or Site Director before making the call, asking for support.

An incident report should be filed with the Site Director as a part of the reporting process.

If the allegation is against or involves a church staff person, pastor, helper or volunteer, or if it occurred in the course of a church ministry event, the person in charge of the event, shall contact the LK District Superintendent.

Procedures for responding to and reporting the abuse are contained herein.

The Director of Communications of the West Virginia Conference or his/her designee is the only person/s authorized to make statements to representatives of the media. All requests for statements shall be directed to the Director of Communications. Staff persons and volunteers are to be trained in how to handle media requests by referring them to the Director of Communications.

How to respond to allegations of abuse

Care for the alleged victim's safety. Once a child, youth has disclosed alleged abuse, the one to whom the disclosure has been made should reassure the alleged victim of a concern for his or her safety and wellbeing. They will then make the call to Department of Human Resources- Bureau for Children and Families. The alleged victim (and any other potential victims if the abuse has allegedly taken place onsite) should be calmly moved to another safe place onsite in view of at least two other non-related adults. Someone safe and familiar should stay with the victim at all times.

Persons who are accused of abuse, if on site, will be immediately and discreetly removed from the ministry setting (both the accused and the victim to separate locations or areas) until the situation is resolved. This is to protect all persons involved, including the accused. The person to whom the disclosure was made should inform the victim in an age appropriate way that a report will be made to appropriate legal authorities. Should the victim be in need of immediate medical attention, a call should be made for medical transport by ambulance. The parents/legal guardians of any victim under the age of 18 should be notified. It may not be appropriate to contact the parents/legal guardians if they are the alleged perpetrators of the abuse, in which event the person designated as the reporter should be contacted and should handle contacting the parents/legal guardians when appropriate.

Report the allegations of abuse. The mandated reporter will obtain the information needed for the filing of reports, including, but not limited to, the victim's name and age, the name of the alleged perpetrator, the alleged facts of the abuse, and physical home addresses for the victim and the perpetrator. It is important to let the victim verbalize the allegations in his or her own words, being

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careful to limit questions asked of children or youth under the age of 18, or to vulnerable adults. If abuse is suspected a report should be made immediately (**not more than 24 hours after suspecting this abuse or neglect**) to Department of Human Resources- Bureau for Children and Families at 1-800- 352-6513. **In any case where the reporter believes that the child suffered serious physical abuse or sexual abuse or sexual assault, the reporter shall also immediately report to the State Police and any law enforcement agency having jurisdiction to investigate.** It is the responsibility of the mandated reporter to handle these matters in a professional and caring manner. Once the call is made the mandated reporter needs to immediately notify the person in charge of the event who will notify the Director of Youth and Outdoor Ministries who will notify the Assistant to the Bishop.

Maintain confidentiality. Allegations are to be discussed only on a need-to-know basis. The person(s) to whom the allegations were disclosed should immediately contact Department of Human Resources- Bureau for Children and Families giving the details to that person. Other adults onsite should be alerted to stay with the alleged victim and other potential victims. Once the allegations have been reported, the person to whom the allegations were made should not discuss the matter with other persons except law enforcement or designated state investigators. To do so could cause irreparable harm to the victims, their families, and the community.

Response Team.

As directed by the Office of the Bishop, the Conference Response Team may be called upon to assist in a given situation.

Handling calls and questions from the media. If a member of the media – newspaper, TV station, Radio station, Magazine – calls or approaches a staff or volunteer in person and asks about the situation, that person should get their name and phone number and respectfully tell them that the Director of Communications will get back to them with the answer as soon as possible. The following “hold response” can be used: “I want to make sure we give you the most accurate and up-to-date information. The Director of Communications can best help you. If you give me your contact information, deadline and topic you are calling about, I will have them return your call as soon as possible.” or, “Here is the phone number/email of the Director of Communications...”

No staff person should answer any questions. The staff person should be polite, but firm. A staff person should **never** simply tell a reporter, “*No Comment,*” as this response raises concern that the incident (alleged or known) is not being dealt with or taken seriously by the church. Nothing is assured to be “off the record” when talking to the media. A staff person/volunteer should realize that any statement made to the media can be used publicly, even if the reporter says it is “off the record.”

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Appendix 2-Participation Covenant Statement

Stout Memorial United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the Church. The following policy statements reflect our Church's commitment to preserving Church gatherings as a holy place of safety and protection for all who would enter and as a place in which all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others.

1. Adult volunteers with children and youth shall observe the "Two-Adult Rule" so that no adult is ever alone with children or youth.
2. Adult volunteers with children and youth shall attend regular training and educational events provided by the Church, District and or Conference to keep volunteers informed of Church policies and state laws regarding child abuse.
3. Adult volunteers shall immediately report suspected abuse or neglect to appropriate authorities.

Please answer each of the following questions:

1. As a volunteer at any event at Stout Memorial UMC where children and/or youth are present, do you agree to observe and abide by all Church policies regarding working in ministries with children and youth? Yes No
2. As a volunteer at any event at Stout Memorial UMC where children and/or youth are present, do you agree to observe the "Two-Adult Rule"? Yes No
3. As a volunteer at any event at Stout Memorial UMC where children and/or youth are present, do you agree to participate in training and education events provided by the church related to your volunteer assignment? Yes No
4. As a volunteer at any event at Stout Memorial UMC where children and/or youth are present, do you agree to promptly report suspected abusive or inappropriate behavior to your supervisors and appropriate authorities? Yes No

I have read this Participation Covenant and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth above.

Signature _____ Date _____

Return completed application to:

Child Protection Coordinator (CPC)
3329 Broad Street
Parkersburg, WV 26104

Appendix 3-Interview Guidelines

Goals of the interview

1. Fill in any gaps in the application form
2. Open paths for further discussion on the part of the applicant
3. Observe how the applicant conducts self in the process
4. Keep a written record of the applicant's responses to the interview process

In conducting the interview, the interviewer should be aware when "red flags" are raised concerning the applicant. These "flags" are indicators of issues which must be explored further to be assured that all information is collected concerning a prospective employee/volunteer. Some of these "flags" include:

Many addresses or churches attended over a short period of time.

This could indicate that a person is trying to be anonymous. But it could also indicate that he/she is a college student who moved a lot to keep rent low.

Wants to work with only one age group.

If someone would like to work with only one specific age group, it could indicate that person has targeted that age group for molestation. Or it could mean that is the age group for which they are trained and experience has shown that they do not work as well with other ages. Also be aware of those who seem overly committed to one age group. For example, someone who simultaneously leads a scout group, coaches Little League, serves as a Big Brother, and now wants to teach Sunday School may be neglecting their own age appropriate peer relationships in order to cultivate potential victims.

Does not want/need/like close supervision

The interview may indicate that the person does not like to be closely supervised. This might raise questions about motivation for applying for this work.

The interviewer needs to be able to explore issues as they arise during the interview and depart from the set of questions prepared to do so. It is helpful, therefore, if interviewers prepare ahead of time for the interview by:

1. Reading the application form
2. Noting areas for exploration

Appendix 4-Sample Interview Questions

1. Why are you interested in being associated with this church-sponsored ministry?
2. How would you describe yourself?
3. When you heard about this position, what appealed to you the most?
4. What specific skills do you bring to this position?
5. With what age group and gender do you prefer to work? Why? Please give examples of your work with this age group.
6. Are you willing to work with other age groups or genders?
7. What kinds of programs or activities would you be willing to lead, supervise or conduct? If trained, would you be willing to conduct other activities?
8. What do you feel are the chief indicators of a successful program or activity?
9. Give a specific example of how you overcame a difficulty in job, school, or family.
10. Give an example of how you overcame a problem with a youngster other than your own. How were you disciplined as a child? How would/do you discipline?
11. Under what supervision style do you work best?
12. In what types of activities or recreation do you participate?
13. What were your favorite subjects in school?
14. What would you like to tell us that has not been covered?
15. What questions do you have about this ministry?
16. Other questions to raise regarding information given on the information form?

One might conclude the interview with one or two hypothetical situations which are typical at conference sponsored events and ask the applicant how they would respond in that situation.

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Appendix 5-Suspected Abuse Report

**Stout Memorial UMC Report of Suspected Incident of Child/Youth Abuse At Church
Sponsored Events**

1. Event: Name, Location, Date, Leader, Sponsoring Agency

1. Name of person (paid or volunteer) observing or receiving disclosure of alleged abuse

2. Alleged victim's name and date of birth _____

3. Date/Location of initial conversation with or report from the alleged victim

4. Alleged victim's statement (please give your detailed summary)

Initial Actions Taken

Persons Notified (date, time, by whom, person contacted, notes)

Event Leader _____

Children Services _____

Law Enforcement _____

-
Parents _____

Church Official _____

Follow-up Actions and Additional Information

Signature of person making this report _____

Print name of person making this report _____

Date of Report _____

Appendix 6-Application to Work/Volunteer with Children and/or Youth

Stout Memorial UMC

Application to Work/Volunteer with Children and/or Youth

This application and reference form are to be completed by all persons (volunteer or compensated) who desire to work with children or youth in our local church. This application form is being used to help the church provide a safe and secure environment for those children and youth who participate in our programs and events and for those who work with them.

Part 1-Personal

Date: _____

Name: _____

Former Name (If applicable): _____

Present Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell: _____ Work: _____

E-Mail: _____

How long have you lived at the above address? _____

If less than one year, provide all addresses for the past 5 years: _____

Please indicate the type of youth or children's work you prefer: _____

Why do you want to serve in this position: _____

Please indicate the date that you are able to begin: _____

What is the minimum length of commitment that you can make? _____

Stout Memorial UMC has an open door policy which means that a parent, volunteer, or church staff can visit/observe at any time. Are you comfortable with this policy? _____

-
Please note: Answering "Yes" to either of the next two questions does not automatically disqualify you from the position for which you are applying. An affirmative answer will necessitate an interview to provide further explanation.

Have you ever been charged with, convicted of, or plead guilty or no contest to a crime against children or other persons? _____

Have you ever committed any act of child abuse or sexual molestation against a minor? _____

Part 2-Church History and Prior Children/Youth Work

Please list other churches you have attended regularly during the past 5 years: _____

Please list all previous church work involving children/youth (include church name and address, type of work performed, and dates): _____

Please list any gifts, callings, training, education, or other factors that have prepared you for working with children/youth: _____

Part 3-References

Please list three persons who have known you for at least five years and who are familiar with your character and/or your work particularly as it relates to supervision of children and youth. None of the references may be a relative.

1. Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Length of time you have known the reference: _____

How do you know the reference? _____

2. Name: _____

Address: _____

-
Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Length of time you have known the reference: _____

How do you know the reference? _____

3. Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Length of time you have known the reference: _____

How do you know the reference? _____

Part 4-Applicant's Authorization and Release

The information contained in this application is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I authorize the references or churches listed in this application to give you any information (including opinions) that they may have regarding my character and fitness to work with children and youth. In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this application, I hereby release any individual, church, judicatory, youth organization, charity, employer, reference, or any other person or organization, including record custodians, both collectively and individually, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me, my heirs, or family on account of compliance or any attempts to comply, with this authorization.

Should my application be accepted, I agree to abide by the Child Protection Standards found herein and will live by the understanding that, as a person of authority, it is my responsibility to avoid inappropriate behavior with children and youth in my care.

I further state that I have carefully read the foregoing Authorization and Release and know the contents thereof and I sign it of my own free will. This is a legally binding agreement which I have read and understand.

Applicant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

