

Jesus said, "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me." Mark 9:37

PURPOSES OF THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

- Provide a safe, secure, and nurturing environment for our children and youth.
- Protect volunteers and paid staff from false allegations of abuse.
- Provide prompt and compassionate response to allegations of abuse.
- Protect the church from unfavorable publicity and legal action.

STATEMENT OF PROHIBITION

The abuse of children or youth will not be tolerated in any form from any individual(s). Instances of abuse will be reported and dealt with in accordance with the church policy.

Individuals who have been convicted of, or plead guilty to, or no contest to, sexual, mental or physical abuse to children or adults shall not be accepted to work with children or youth in any capacity.

CODE OF CONDUCT

I consider this a vow to God, and a covenant between me and First Presbyterian Church of Davenport, the children and youth with whom I will be working and their families.

While working with children and youth I will conduct myself as a Christian called to service in God's Kingdom.

I understand that I have been entrusted with the safety and welfare of all children and youth assigned to me. At all times I will guard their physical safety and mental, emotional, and bodily health.

I understand that I must be careful of "suggestive situations." I will abide by the two adult rule. If a child or youth requests time alone with me, I will inform the other adult supervisor and will meet with the child or youth in sight of the other, but not necessarily where others can hear us.

I will never touch a child or youth in anger.

I will use appropriate signs of affection and Christian caring. I will respect the feelings of those who do not enjoy even the slightest casual touch.

I will guard my language. I will not swear or use inappropriate language in the presence of children and youth.

I will set a good example of respecting the property of the church, any off-site locations of a church event and of others, and will be a good steward of God's earth.

I will immediately report any behavior toward a child or youth that seems to be abusive or otherwise inappropriate.

Child Protection Policy and Procedures



*We affirm
that children and youth
are a gift from God and that the
future of the church rests with them.
We further affirm
that it is our obligation to
protect their physical, mental,
emotional, and spiritual well-being.*

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1702 IOWA STREET, DAVENPORT, IOWA 52803
Ph: 563-326-1691 ■ www.fpcdavenport.org

WHY HAVE THIS POLICY

There are those in the world who don't place the same value on children as Jesus teaches us to have. Every week, the newspaper, magazines, TV, and radio tell us about atrocities happening to children. It is too easy to say, “Well, that can't happen in our church.” But we know that it can.

We recognize that abuse of children and youth occurs often in our society and can occur in our church. We are also aware that allegations and incidents of abuse can be devastating to the accuser, accused, their families, and the congregation. It is up to us to take steps to reduce the likelihood of abuse occurring in our church.

With this in mind, the Session of First Presbyterian Church approved this Child Protection Policy in December 2000

Our Child Protection Policy includes four major components:

- Appropriate supervision
- Screening of volunteers and paid staff
- Education of volunteers, children, and youth
- System for reporting and evaluating allegations of abuse

SUPERVISION

The Two Adult Rule

The two adult rule may be the single most important aspect of the Child Protection Policy. According to this rule, a minimum of two adults (paid or unpaid) must be present to supervise at each activity involving children or youth.

Exceptions to this rule may be made during an event only in extreme circumstances where the safety and/or security of the children would be compromised. It is the intent of this policy that an event will be cancelled, if it is known prior to the beginning of the event, that adequate supervision will not be available.

Overnight Activities

In the cases of overnight activities involving either male and female children or youth, there must be two male and two female adults supervising the events.

Transportation

Drivers who provide transportation for a church sponsored event are asked to complete an application, sign the “Code of Conduct,” and have a valid driver's license and automobile liability insurance.

There may be times when only one adult (the driver) is present in the vehicle. In no case, however, will a single child or youth ride with only one adult.

SCREENING OF PAID STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

All paid church staff are screened regardless of whether or not they work directly with children and youth.

All volunteers who work with children or youth are also screened.

All volunteers are asked to complete an application. References and interviews are requested for many volunteers.

All paid staff positions are screened at the highest level. This includes criminal background checks.

All volunteers are asked to read and sign a “Code of Conduct.” (*See back page.*)

EDUCATION

Educational programs on child abuse and the specifics of the church Child Protection Policy are provided to all volunteers.

Education programs are also provided regularly to the children and youth of the church.

REPORTING

The Policy provides for reporting an allegation of abuse and the appropriate response by the church.