

**“Policy and Guidelines to Provide a Safe Place for Children and Youth  
at  
Antioch Church of the Brethren”\***

**Task:** The Church Board and its Commissions task are to create a safe place for the children and youth served by the Antioch COB. For this reason the following policy and guidelines have been established.

**Volunteers:** All paid staff and volunteers who seek to serve with children and youth under 18 years of age (aka. “minor”) must be a part of the Antioch COB for a minimum of six months and will have completed and submitted a “Children and Youth Ministry Workers Application.”

**Guidelines:** All approved children and youth staff and volunteers are expected to follow these guidelines.

1. All staff and volunteers will review and be familiar with this policy and these guidelines.
2. All staff and volunteers are required to attend training and review sessions for ministry with minors when offered.
3. When supervising minors, the volunteers should monitor behavior to insure appropriate interactions.
4. It is the staff and volunteers responsibility to support a minor’s “no” (verbal or non-verbal) whether it is directed towards another child or an adult regarding physical contact, unless the child’s safety is endangered. Insure that “no” is respected.
5. Infant changing areas are to be in prominent view.
6. Two adults (over 18 years of age) are preferred in all circumstances where childcare and ministry for minors is occurring.
7. In the case of only one adult being present with minors, the director (Children’s Church, Sunday school, Wednesday Night Alive, Etc.) will randomly check each ministry setting.
8. All doors to classrooms for minors will have a window. If there is no window, the door is to remain open.
9. Parental permission must be secured for any staff or volunteer to meet privately with a minor.
10. At no time is a known sex offender to be allowed to serve in ministry with minors.
11. Any exceptions to these guidelines must have prior written consent of the “Risk Management Team.”

**Risk Management Team:** The Risk Management team is accountable to the Church Board and is responsible for insuring that training occurs at least annually, that the application process is being followed, and that the policy and guidelines are being adhered to throughout the children and youth ministry program. The Risk Management Team will be comprised of the following:

- Pastor
- Commission of Education Representative
- Commission of Administration Representative
- Pastoral Counseling Committee Representative

**Reporting Procedure:**

1. All approved applicants working with minors will be informed how to report instances of abuse by the Risk Management Team.
2. All staff and volunteers working with minors will report all instances of abuse immediately to the Risk Management Team
3. A completed “Notice of Abuse/Injury” will be prepared by the Risk Management Team as soon as possible (no later than the first 24 hours) and will consult with the pastor to continue the response plan.

**Response Plan:** When a staff member or ministry volunteer witnesses an abusive situation, is told of abuse, or is accused of abuse, the Risk Management Team must be contacted immediately who will respond by:

1. Contacting the pastor (if not already involved). If the pastor is accused of abuse the Church Board Chair and Church Moderator should be notified.
2. Call the Child Protective Services Hotline (1-800-552-7096)
3. Call the minor's parents
4. Call congregations attorney
5. Call congregations insurance provider
6. Call Virlina District Executive or Associate Executive
7. Prepare a written report of the incident

**Media:** The pastor and moderator will work together to prepare a media statement if needed. If the pastor is the accused the board chair and moderator will work together on any media statements.

**Victim:**

1. Insure the safety of the victim
2. Support victim and family
3. Assure confidentiality

**Accused:**

1. Treat with dignity, respect and support
2. Do not allow the accused to work again with minors until charges have been cleared and written clearance has been provided by the Risk Management Team and the Church Board.

**Policy and Guideline Review:** The Risk Management Team and the Church Board will review at least annually and will agree and sign off on any modifications or changes.

**Dated and Signed:**

Pastor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Moderator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Church Board Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Commission of Administration Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Commission of Education Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Pastoral Counseling Committee Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_