

**Child and Youth Protection Policy**  
**St. Augustine Shores United Methodist Church**  
**St. Augustine, Florida**

**Introduction**

A central tenet of the Christian faith is the inherent value and worth of all children, youth, and adults. Children and youth are least able to protect themselves in our society and are particularly vulnerable to abuse and neglect. The St. Augustine Shores United Methodist Church is desirous of doing what it can to protect the youth and children who participate in the life of this congregation.

We believe implementing a policy and adopting procedures to protect our children recognizes that:

*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 states that "... children must be protected from economic, physical and sexual exploitation and abuse." Tragically, Churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, and exploitation. . . occur in Churches, both, large and small, urban and rural. The problem cuts across all economic, cultural and racial lines. . . . God calls us to make our Churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from abuse.*

"Child abuse prevention and Ministry Protection policies and procedures are essential for congregations, not only for the protection and safety of our children and youth, but also for our volunteers and staff working with youth."

"The Gospel calls us to be engaged in ministry with children and youth. We should not allow the risks to undermine or stop our ministry. Rather, we must:

- Acknowledge the risks and develop a practical plan to address these issues:
- Take steps to prevent harm to our children; and
- Continue to answer the Gospel's imperative to be in ministry with children, thus making a difference in their lives." (Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Abuse in the Church for Children and Youth).

**I. Definitions**

**A. "Child" and "Youth" and "Adult"**

Following the public school system, a "child" is anyone age of 11 or under. A "youth" is anyone not a "child" and under the age of 18. An adult is anyone 18 years of age or older and has finished high school.

**B. “Paid Staff Person,” “Adult Volunteer,” and “Screened Adult”**

A **Paid Staff Person** is someone paid by the church, overseen by Staff Parish and screened. An **Adult Volunteer** is someone who has not been screened. They can work in a room with a Screened Adult or paid staff person. A **Screened Adult** is a volunteer who has gone through the screening process. These persons may or may not be members, but they must be regular attendees and active in church activities for at least six months.

**C. Youth Helpers** - Youth below the age of 18 years assisting with child or youth activities. They can assist with activities but should not be considered an adult volunteer and should be supervised themselves.

**D. Child Abuse** For purposes of the Child Protection Policy and Procedures, child abuse is defined as any of the following:

1) Physical Abuse: Violent non-accidental contact which results in injury. This includes, but is not limited to, striking, biting, or shaking. Injuries include bruises, fractures, cuts, and burns.

2) Sexual Abuse: Any form of sexual activity with a child, whether at the church, at home, or any other setting. The abuser may be an adult, an adolescent, or other minor.

3) Emotional Abuse: A pattern of intentional conduct which crushes a child’s/youth’s spirit attacks his/her self-worth through rejection, threats, terrorizing, isolating, or belittling.

**II. Screening and Selection of Church Staff and Adult Volunteers**

The Pastor and the Staff Parish Relations Committee are charged with the responsibility of developing, implementing and evaluating the process for recruiting, screening, selecting, training and supervising of non-appointive church staff and adult volunteers. (¶ 258.12 2008 Book of Discipline)

A. Adult volunteers who regularly work with the Church’s children and youth and each church paid staff person will be screened. Those who work regularly with children/youth will be trained on child protection issues prior to beginning their regular involvement with children and youth. The procedures for screening are as follows: Each person being considered to work regularly with children and/or youth, whether as a volunteer or paid staff person, shall fill out a Child/Youth Worker Application & Covenant (See Appendix I). This screening is good for 5 years after which time a re-screening will be necessary.

B. Before placing the applicant in a position of responsibility with children or youth, a designated paid staff member and other person charged with specific

responsibility will interview the applicant reviewing with them the Child/Youth Worker Application & Covenant. (See possible questions for interviews in Appendix II.)

- C. The persons conducting this interview will contact the references provided on the Child/Youth Worker Application & Covenant and any additional persons as the circumstances dictate. A written record of such contacts will be retained with the application form on the Reference Check Form (Appendix III).
- D. Each person applying to work with children and/or youth shall “authorize” the church to conduct a criminal background check. The application for service with St. Augustine Shores United Methodist Church or when deciding whether to modify or continue the ongoing involvement Shores United Methodist Church may obtain a “consumer report” and/or and “investigative consumer report” on you from TRAK-1 Technology, a consumer reporting agency, or from any third party, in strict compliance with both state and federal laws.
- E. Before beginning work with either children or youth, each paid staff member and volunteer will sign a statement that they have read, understood, and agree to abide by this Child and Youth Protection Policy.
- F. After the interview and background check have been accomplished, the decision will be made to accept or reject the applicant as a paid staff member or adult volunteer who will work with youth and/or children.
- G. Where it has been determined that an applicant should **not** work with children or youth, those persons involved with the decision should handle it in a sensitive manner. The appointed clergy and her/his designee should inform the applicant in person. The specific reasons for the decision should be given, whenever possible.
- H. It is important that all records be kept in a locked cabinet in the church office. There should be a system in place that gives those who need these records easy access and a safe place to be stored when they are not needed.
- I. Although not required to personally accomplish the above tasks, the appointed clergy and the Staff-Parish Relations Committee shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with sub-paragraphs (A) through (H) above.

### **III. Ongoing Education of Persons Who Work With Children and Youth**

The Pastor and Staff Parish Relations Committee shall ensure that annual training focused on current issues of child protection is available to and received by those

working with children and youth. Attendance at this training shall be required of all paid staff members, screened and non-screened adult volunteers who work consistently with children and/or youth.

The training should include:

- A. The definition and recognition of child abuse.
- B. The Church's policy and procedures on child abuse and the reasons for having them.
- C. The need to maintain a positive classroom environment, including appropriate discipline and age-level characteristics.
- D. The appropriate behavior for teachers and leaders of child/youth events.
- E. Abuse reporting responsibilities and procedures.
- F. Definition of appropriate interpersonal boundaries.
- G. The meaning and importance of confidentiality

#### **IV. Supervision of Children and Youth**

##### **A. General Rules**

- 1. All activities involving children and youth will be supervised by at least one screened adult.
- 2. When reasonably feasible, each room set aside for children/youth should have a door with a window.
- 3. Children toddler through grade 6 should be escorted to the bathroom when there is no bathroom adjoining the classroom. The adult may wait in the Gathering Room while a child is in a bathroom in the sanctuary.
- 4. Window curtain/blinds should be kept open at all times and door windows should not be covered at any time.
- 5. All children/youth activities must have a written record of the names of participants and supervisors. Records shall be kept in the church office for three years.

##### **B. Supervision of Sunday School Activities**

###### **1. Crib/Toddler**

At least two adults, one must be **screened** will be present for all activities involving infants and toddlers. In addition, a designated screened adult shall periodically check each classroom.

###### **2. Grades K-6**

At least one **screened** adult will be present for all classroom activities. Two screened adults are preferred. In addition, a designated person shall periodically check each classroom.

### 3. Grades 7-12

At least one **screened** adult will be present for all classroom activities. In addition designated person shall periodically check all classrooms.

## **C. Supervision During VBS, Wednesday Nights, Wednesday Afterschool program and other Larger Groups**

### 1. Crib/Toddler to age 4

One screened adult for every 5 children. In addition a designated screened adult shall periodically check each classroom.

### 2. K-grade 2

At least one screened adult for every 7 children. In addition a designated screened adult shall periodically check each classroom.

### 3. Grades 3-6

At least one screened adult for every 8 children. In addition a designated screened adult shall periodically check each classroom.

### 4. Grades 7-12

At least one screened adult must be present for all classroom activities. In addition a designated screened adult shall periodically check each classroom.

## **D. Open Door Policy**

Parents, volunteers or staff of the church will be permitted, as reasonableness dictates, to visit and observe all programs and classrooms at any time.

## **E. Sign-in/Sign-out Procedure**

1. When a new child begins to participate in any church activity, the Sunday School Teacher, VBS Director, or the director of the specified children's/youth activity will inquire about any existing court orders or custody issues regarding that child. That information will be passed on to the child's teacher(s)
2. Adults responsible for children who are infant through grade 5 will sign-in the child and clarify who shall sign-out the child later that day.
3. Picking up children by non-authorized adults is forbidden.

## **F. Supervision of Non-Classroom Activities**

With the exception of the circumstances identified under the “Special Rules for Supervision of Specific Activities and Transportation”, at least two screened adults will be present for all non-classroom activities involving children and/or youth. Any meetings held in an individual’s home must be supervised by at least two adults who are not members of the same family. Meetings held in an individual’s home must be preapproved by the parents and the Staff Parish Relations Committee Chair or the Pastor.

## **G. Counseling of Youth and Children**

In instances of youth or child counseling where circumstances dictate that counseling would be most effective on a one-on-one basis, an appropriate church paid staff person may meet individually with a youth with the knowledge of at least one other paid staff member. At any counseling session with children or youth, the door of the room used should remain open for the entire session, unless there is glass in the door or wall which gives a clear view into the room. If another adult is not in the building when the counseling occurs, the session should be moved to in a public place, such as a restaurant or outside where other people are present.

**NOTE 1: At the initial meeting, the counselor should first determine if they are qualified to address the child’s/youth’s needs effectively. Counseling should be limited to no more than three sessions. Referral to another more qualified counselor should be considered.**

**NOTE 2: This is not meant to govern a licensed professional counselor in a paid counseling relationship with a child or youth.**

## **H. Time Following Group Events**

Following child/youth group events, it is inevitable that occasionally a child’s/youth’s transportation will arrive after all other participants have departed. In those circumstances, a child/youth may unavoidably be supervised by one screened adult. Under these circumstances, the general rule requiring the presence of two screened adults is suspended and the screened adult is responsible for exercising his/her best judgment for the participant’s well-being.

## **V. Transportation**

### **A. General Rules**

Transporting children and youth is an important concern. Their safety can be at risk in a variety of ways. Therefore, certain discretion must be used depending upon the event attended, the locale of the event, and the age group participating. This Policy includes both Requirements and Guidelines. When feasible, there should be adherence to the recommendations in the Guidelines. It is expected that the Requirements will always be followed.

### **B. Requirements**

1. Drivers must be known to the designated adult leader of the event.
2. When a child/youth is transported in any vehicle, the driver must be either the child's/youth's parent/guardian, or a screened adult or a paid staff person who is at least 18 years old.
3. When a child/youth is transported in a church-owned vehicle, the driver must be at least 21 years of age; provided, however, exception is made when the driver is a paid staff member who is at least 18 years of age and for whom a motor vehicle record search has been made and the record has been found by the Appointed clergy and supply pastors or his/her designee to be satisfactory.
4. Drivers must have a valid driver's license for the vehicle being operated. For example, if driving a church bus, a commercial license is required. A copy of the driver's license should be on file at the church.
5. Drivers must require that seat belts be used at all times and the number of passengers must not exceed the number of seat belts.
6. Drivers should be advised of a designated route and should not deviate from it except in cases of emergency or road detours.
7. Drivers should not use cell phones unless required for communication with other drivers and should not text message while driving.
8. When there is reason to believe it would not be safe for a youth to ride in a vehicle driven by another youth, the adults responsible should intervene and take reasonable steps to make alternative arrangements for all concerned.
9. When a trip is planned and the destination is expected to be 100 miles or more from the point of departure, drivers are to be listed on an "approved driver list" maintained in the church office.
10. Persons who regularly drive church owned vehicles are to be listed on an "approved driver list" maintained in the church office.
11. In order to be listed on the "approved driver list" of drivers, a Motor Vehicle Record search must be conducted and the appointed clergy and supply pastors or his/her designee must determine if the record is satisfactory. (The Ministry Protection Conference office will advise how to obtain a Motor Vehicle Record of a driver. It is usually without charge. Call (800) 282-8011, ext. 137.
12. Drivers will read and sign an acknowledgement form indicating that the Child Protection Policy has been read and will be followed (See Appendix IV).

### **C. Guidelines**

1. Drivers should be accompanied by at least one other adult.
2. Drivers should receive training for the church owned vehicle being operated.
3. Youth who drive their own vehicles should be reminded regularly of the importance of vehicle safety.

## **VI. Trip and Retreat Supervision**

Trip and Retreat settings can call for different child/youth protection requirements depending on the circumstances. What follows are Requirements and Guidelines of this Policy. The Requirements should always be implemented. Depending on the circumstances of the setting, who is in attendance, etc., some or all of the Guidelines should be implemented. Those in charge of the trip or retreat should be mindful of both Requirements and Guidelines, in addition to applying their own wisdom to the needs of a given occasion.

### **A. Requirements**

1. There will be at least two **screened** adults present for all trips, retreats and other events where the children and/or youth gather overnight at, or away from, the church campus.
2. There will be at least one **screened** adult for each gender present at co-ed overnight events. At single gender overnight events, at least one of the two screened adults present shall be of the same gender as the child/youth.
3. The person in charge of youth/children for each overnight trip and/or retreat shall carry parental permission slips including permission for emergency medical care. (See Appendix VI)

### **B. Guidelines**

In a hotel type setting, rooms should be assigned as follows:

1. Separate rooms for adults and child/youth should be assigned with at least two children/youth per room.
2. Assignments should be made so that an adult room is between two children/youth rooms.
3. Adults should make random monitoring hall trips and room checks at night by two adults of the same gender as those being checked.
4. A hotel should be selected where the rooms open to the interior of the building (i.e., do not open to the outside).

## **VII. On-line Safety**

It is acknowledged that the use of computers and other electronic means of communications may be useful tools in supporting child and youth ministries. However, it should also be recognized that these forms of communication also potentially pose a unique risk.

- a. Church computers that are set up for guests or program participants to access the internet should be in high-traffic places and randomly monitored by staff. Controls should be in place to prevent access to inappropriate content.

## **VIII. Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse**

Florida Statute 39.201 entitled "Mandatory Reports" states that: *"Any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare, as defined in this chapter, ... shall report such knowledge or suspicion to the department"*

While the statute is limited to situations involving abuse by a parent, custodian, caregiver or other persons responsible for a child's welfare, the moral imperative to protect children extends to other situations where abuse is suspected. Suspected abuse within the context of a church day school or pre-school does fall within the description of the Florida Statute and a report is required.

Clearly, when child abuse is suspected or observed, the moral imperative, and potentially the legal requirement, is to call the Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-960 ABUSE (1-800-962-2873)

- A. Immediately, yet with dignity and respect for the sacred worth of the accused, remove the accused from further involvement with children and/or youth. Once the proper authorities have been contacted and the safety of the child or youth is secured, the appointed clergy or other designated persons should inform the accused that abuse has been reported.
- B. If abuse is observed by, disclosed to, or suspected by a volunteer and/or paid staff member of the church, the observer shall report the incident immediately to the appointed clergy and supply pastors. If the appointed clergy and supply pastors are not available, the matter should be reported to the District Superintendent.

If the accused is the appointed clergy and supply pastors or a member of her/his family, the allegations shall be immediately reported to the District Superintendent and immediately reported to the proper authorities as required by state or local law. The District Superintendent will take responsibility and act according to established rules of *The Book of Discipline* with respect to claims against a pastor. If the District Superintendent is not available, the incident should be reported to the Bishop's office in Lakeland.

- C. Notify the parents of the victim and take whatever steps are necessary to assure the safety and well being of the child or youth until the parent(s) arrive.
- D. **NOTE:** If one or both of the parents is the alleged abuser, follow the advice of the authorities concerning notification of others.
- E. Take all allegations seriously and reach out to the victim and the victim's family. Show care and support to help prevent further hurt. Extend whatever pastoral resources are needed. Remember that the care and safety of the victim is the **first** priority. Respond in a positive and supportive manner to the victim and the victim's family.
- F. The church should provide a supportive atmosphere to all those who are affected, offering both objectivity and empathy as it seeks to create a climate in which healing can take place.
- G. After having reported the suspected abuse to the proper authorities, the appointed clergy and supply pastors is to report the incident immediately to the District Superintendent. If the District Superintendent is unavailable, the incident should be reported to the Bishop's office.
- H. Keep a written report of the steps taken by the Church in response to the reported abuse. (See Appendix VII). The report should be brief and contain only factual information relevant to the situation. It should be kept in a secure place. It should be written in ink or typed to prevent it from being changed.
- I. Any contact with the media should be handled by a **pre-determined** spokesperson selected by the appointed clergy and supply pastors. **NOTE:** The Conference Communications Department is a good source of help when media questions arise. The church spokesperson should generally convey a spirit of concern for the spiritual, physical, and emotional wellbeing of all who are affected, and that the matter is being diligently and appropriately handled.

NOTE: The question that sometimes arises is: What about a "confidential communication" with a clergy person?

Florida law (FS90.505) provides that some specific communications may be considered confidential if they occurred in the context of "seeking spiritual counsel or advice" from a clergy person. Thus a clergy person may be confronted with the dilemma of discovering or suspecting abuse in the setting of a privileged conversation. While the church has historically placed a high value on clergy keeping such confidences, the 2008 *UM Discipline*, par. 341.5, provides an exception in cases of suspected child abuse or neglect.

Again, the moral imperative is to do that which will best protect children.

## **IX. RESPONSE BY CHURCH WORKERS TO INCIDENTS, INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS**

In order to assure proper attention is given to any child who is injured or involved in an accident, an incident report must be completed by an adult supervisor within 24 hours of the incident (See Appendix VI). All completed accident reports should be given to the pastor.

### **IX. Implementation**

Unless otherwise specifically stated, it shall be the responsibility of the Staff Parish Relations Committee to implement this Policy, to design and conduct future training, and to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of this Policy.

### **XI. Application**

All of those who participate in the life of this congregation and use its facilities – individuals, organizations, and groups within and outside this congregation -- are expected to respect, implement, and adhere to these provisions as a minimum.

## **EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

Pastor-in-Charge: Randy Strickland, 904-436-5312

Chairperson of SPRC: Carolyn Troy, 904-794-1128

Director of Christian Education: June Baker, 904-794-1128

Director of Youth Ministries: Sara Hernandez, 904-669-7116

District Superintendent: Timothy Smiley, 904-396-3026

Conference Risk Manager: Jim Severance 1-800-282-8011, ext. 137

Florida Conference Bishop's Office: Timothy Whitaker, 863-688-4427

St. Augustine Police Department: 904-825-1074

St Johns County Sheriff's Department: 904-824-8304

County Child Abuse Reporting:

Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-962-2873

Conference Media Spokesperson: Frank North, 1-800-282-8011, ext. 505

**APPENDIX I**

**CHILD / YOUTH WORKER APPLICATION & COVENANT**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Current job responsibilities: \_\_\_\_\_

Previous experience with children: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Interest, Hobbies, Skills: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been charged, convicted of, or plead guilty to a misdemeanor or a felony related to child abuse or other crimes of violence? Yes or No

If Yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever had to deal with a child abuse situation? Yes or No

If Yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

If Yes, what was your role: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Child/Youth Worker Application & Covenant      page 2**

The congregation of St. Augustine Shores 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 statement reflect our congregation's commitment to preserving this church 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. No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (either sexual abuse, physical abuse or emotional abuse) should volunteer to work with children or youth in any church-sponsored activity.
2. All adult volunteers involved with children or youth of our church must have been active participants of the congregation for at least six months before beginning a volunteer assignment.
3. All adults involved with children and youth shall observe the Child /Youth Protection Policy **at all times.**
4. Adult volunteers with children and youth shall attend regular training and educational events provided by the church to keep volunteers informed of church policies and laws regarding child abuse.
5. All adults shall immediately report to their supervisor any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.

Please answer the following questions:

1. Do you agree to observe and abide by all church policies regarding working in ministries with children and youth? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
2. Do you agree to participate in annual training and education events provided by the church related to your volunteer assignments? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No
3. Do you agree to promptly report abusive or inappropriate behavior to your supervisor? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

I have read this Application and Participation Covenant, and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth above. \_\_\_\_\_(initial)

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Signature of Applicant

Date

## APPENDIX II

### INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

There are a number of interview questions that can help in determining the motives behind why people want to work with children. Other questions can help to identify traits often found in child abusers. By asking questions, keeping notes and sharing your concerns and thoughts with other interviewers you may be able to screen-out potential abusers in the early stages of the pre-employment process.

Tell us about yourself.

This begins the interview with less threatening, open-ended questions. It allows the candidate some control in what he/she wants to share. They often reveal information in response to this question that you could not or would not think to ask.

Summarize your employment history.

Look for frequent moves, gaps in employment, and reasons for termination. Tell me about your experiences with children. Have you ever worked or volunteered for other youth serving organizations? Watch for adults whose lives seem to revolve around spending time with children.

Share with us a favorite family memory.

Adults raised in abusive households may have issues that they haven't dealt with. The majority of abusers have been abused as a child.

What strengths can you bring to this job?

Why do you want to work with children?

Once again, watch the candidate who is child focused or those who want to work with children because they are "pure", "innocent", "trusting", "non-judgmental", "clean", etc. Adults should want to work with children because they have something to offer children. Beware of the adults who want to work with children because children meet their adult needs for control, love, or affection.

What do you do in your space (leisure) time? What are your hobbies or interests?

Watch for those who prefer to spend their free time with children and those whose hobbies are more appealing to children than they are to most adults (i.e., video games, photography, models, magic, etc.).

What ages of children do you prefer to work with?

Child sexual abusers generally have a specific age they prefer. Does the candidate indicate a preference for sex, age, certain traits?

Do you have any reservations about working with children of different ages?

Same as above.

Do you think there are any reasons to treat boys and girls differently?

Listen closely to their reasons or rationale. Does it feel right?

How were you disciplined as a child? How did you feel about this way?

Watch for families that used physical punishment as a method to resolve problems. Does the candidate have unresolved issues related to their upbringing or do they condone this type of discipline?

## **INTERVIEW GUIDELINES, page 2**

What do you consider acceptable discipline?

Watch for the adult who needs to control or those with positive attitudes toward corporal punishment. Listen for signs that the candidate may use psychological abuse to punish. Does their response indicate that they lack respect for children's thoughts and feelings?

How do you tend to deal with stress?

Can the candidate recognize when they are under stress? Do they have a plan for dealing with it? Is it acceptable?

What makes you angry? How do you deal with anger?

Same as above

If you saw another teacher/staff/volunteer, one you liked and respected, strike a child, what would you do? Make sure at some point the candidate plans to tell a supervisor.

Have you ever been reprimanded at work? For what?

Was the reprimand related to their ability to deal with children?

Who are your best friends?

Adults' best friends should be other adults.

Do you relate better with adults or with children? Why?

Be cautious of anyone who relates better to children than adults.

How would you react to any accusation of child abuse?

Watch for a comfort level, a reasonable response, a panic look, a carefully thought out manipulative response.

What would you do if a child told you a secret?

Make sure the candidate does not make a promise not to tell.

What would you do if a child asked you a question about sex? Is the candidate comfortable with this topic?

Do they share only what the child is asking?

Ask other "what if questions". Watch for a candidate whose responses are consistent with your philosophy, who asks other staff for help and support; one who is a team player. Note how quickly they resort to punitive punishment and how realistic or honest the responses are. Ask other interview questions pertinent to the position you're interviewing for. Be cautious of candidates who seem overly anxious to be hired, those who seem "too smooth" and those who try to take over the interview.

**APPENDIX III**

**FORM FOR REFERENCE CHECK**

Applicant name: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is your relationship to the applicant? \_\_\_\_\_

2. How long have you known the applicant? \_\_\_\_\_

3. How well do you know the applicant? \_\_\_\_\_

4. How would you describe the applicant?

5. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to children/youth?

6. How would you describe the applicant's leadership abilities?

7. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to adults?

8. How would you feel about having the applicant as a volunteer worker with your child and/or youth?

9. Do you know of any characteristics that would negatively affect the applicant's ability to work with children/or? If so, please describe.

10. Do you have any knowledge that the applicant has ever been convicted to a crime? If so, please describe.

11. Please list any other comments you would like to make:

Reference inquiry completed by: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**APPENDIX IV**

**AUTHORIZATION AND REQUEST FOR CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK**

Authorization and Request For Multi State Criminal SO, SST & MVR  
(Consists of Motor Vehicle Report, Broad Screen & SSN Check)

I, \_\_\_\_\_ HEREBY AUTHORIZE  
St. Augustine Shores United Methodist Church to request Trak-1  
Technology (Background Screening Company) to release information  
regarding any record of charges or convictions contained in its files,  
maintained on me, whether said file is a local, state, or national file,  
and including but not limited to accusations and convictions for  
crimes committed against minors, to the fullest extent permitted by  
state and federal law. I do release Trak-1 Technology from all  
liability that may result from any such disclosure made in response to  
this request.

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Applicant

Date

Print applicant's full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Address & Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Print all other name(s) that have been used by applicant (if any):

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's license number: \_\_\_\_\_

License expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX V**

**St. Augustine Shores United Methodist Church  
724 Shores Boulevard  
St. Augustine, Florida 32086  
PARENTAL CONSENT AND MEDICAL AUTHORIZATION**

Name of child/youth: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Evening phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

As the parent (or legal guardian) of: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that my child/youth will be participating in a number of activities for the calendar year \_\_\_\_\_, which carry with them a certain degree of risk. Some of the activities are swimming, boating, hiking, camping, field trips, sports and other activities which the church may offer. I consent for my child to participate in these activities. I also represent that my child/youth is physically fit and has the necessary skills to safely participate in these activities. Particularly, I state that my child/youth **can or cannot** circle one) swim. I also understand and give consent for my child to travel to and from these events in transportation provided by volunteer drivers.

**MEDICAL TREATMENT AUTHORIZATION**

It is my understanding that the Church will attempt to notify me in case of a medical emergency involving my child/youth. If the church cannot reach me, then I authorize the church to hire a doctor or health-care professional, and I give my permission to the doctor or other health-care professional, to provide the medical services he or she may deem necessary. I will pay for any medical expenses so incurred.

I will notify the church if I feel there are any health considerations that would prevent my child/youth's participation in any of the activities listed above.

Allergies or other health considerations: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Policy/Group # \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX VI**

**CHILD/YOUTH PROTECTION INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

Reason for report: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of reporter: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of Child(ren)/Youth: \_\_\_\_\_ Age(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly describe what happened: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Were there any witnesses?:  Yes  No If yes, list: \_\_\_\_\_

What action did you take?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Has the incident been resolved?:  Yes  No Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Has the District Superintendent been notified?:  Yes  No If yes, give date: \_\_\_\_\_

Has Risk Management been notified?  Yes  No

Name of reporter: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of reporter: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Report submitted to: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX VII

### PASTOR'S LETTER TO PARENTS

Parents,

Please know that we value and appreciate both you and your child(ren)! Your church wants to stand behind and beside you in caring for them. It is important for us to clearly outline for you who is responsible when you are either here for special activities or are attending to other matters (a meeting, working, etc.).

St. Augustine Shores United Methodist Church and its representatives in its programs can only be responsible for children who are **ACTIVELY PARTICIPATING IN THE ORGANIZED PORTION OF OUR PROGRAMS**. Also if you are working or attending a meeting and your spouse is caring for your child on our campus, then that child(ren) is clearly under your care and not under the protection of the church's leaders or teachers.

Part of our concern in all of this is, of course, liability. However, the **GREATER ISSUE** is the safety of the child(ren). We must be certain that the lines of authority are clearly defined as to where the church's responsibility starts/stops and the parents' responsibility starts/stops, so that all of our children are safe and protected while on church property.

Thank you for your help and understanding.

*Randy Strickland*