

Child & Youth Protection Policy Training---Shores United Methodist Church

1. The definition and recognition of child abuse

Physical Abuse -violent, non-accidental contact which results in injury: hitting, biting, shaking and results in bruises, fractures, cuts and burns.

Sexual Abuse-any form of sexual activity with a child, whether at home, at church or any other setting.

Emotional Abuse-the pattern of intentional conduct which crushes a child or youth's spirit or attacks their self-worth through rejection, threats, terrorizing, isolating, or belittling.

Neglect-- failure to provide for a child or youth's basic needs or failure to protect a child or youth from harm.

2. Current child protection policies and issues

Children and youth are least able to protect themselves, vulnerable to abuse and neglect. Child abuse happens daily, across every socio-economic family, religion, and place.

All volunteers with our children and youth MUST have been affiliated with our church for 6 months.

Paid Staff Person

Screened Adult

Adult Volunteer

Youth Helper 12-18 years old

Screened = Interview + 3 personal references checked + criminal background check.

ANNUAL TRAINING FOR EVERYONE, including keyholders!

3. The church's policy and procedures on child abuse and the reasons for having them

Staff-Parish Relations Committee is responsible

Background checks updated every three years

Sign in/Sign out---books and attendance charts. Keep records in church office for 3 years

Release children to authorized adults only—check registration forms.

Children accompanied to restroom if not attached to the classroom

4. Abuse reporting responsibilities and procedures

Abusers can be anyone, including other children.

Following Florida law, all church personnel (staff and volunteers) are Mandatory Reporters.

If church staff or volunteers observed or suspected of abuse, contact Pastor first, then Abuse Hotline.

5. Maintain a positive classroom environment, including appropriate discipline and behavior

Sunday School :

Crib-Toddler to Grade 2...At least 2 non-related adults, one must be screened, another designated screened adult will periodically walk through

Grades 3 through 6...At least 1 screened adult, two are preferred, another screened adult will periodically walk through, non-related adults

Grades 7-12, our youth...At least one screened adult, another screened adult will periodically walk through, non-related adults

Larger groups such as VBS and Wednesday programs:

Crib-Toddler...1 screened adult for every 5 children, another screened adult will periodically check, non-related adults.

Kindergarten to Grade 2...1 screened adult for every 7 children, another screened adult will periodically check, non-related adults

Grades 3-6 ...1 screened adult for every 8 children, another screened adult will periodically check, non-related adults

Grades 7-12... 1 screened adult must be present at all times, another screened adult will periodically check, non-related adults

Be familiar with posted schedules and rules for behavior.

We are in God's House and should behave accordingly.

6. Appropriate behaviors for teachers and leaders of child/youth events

Window blinds always open!

Never be alone with a child/youth.

Sign in/sign out required.

Personal cellphone texts/calls in emergencies only.

7. Definition of interpersonal boundaries

Do not touch a child any place that a bathing suit covers.

Counsel children with another adult present

8. The meaning and importance of confidentiality.

What happens at church stays at church!

DO NOT post the photos of children/youth at church activities on your own page. You CAN “share” the church’s posting on your own pages.

DO NOT send a “friend request” to any children or youth.

You CAN accept a friend request from them.

DO NOT send a text message or email to one of our children or youth UNLESS you copy the parent or send the message to ALL of the children or youth in the program.

Church Emergency Contact Information

Appointed clergy and supply pastors: Carolyn Westlake (507) 208-5842

Chairperson of SPRC: Vicki Hall (904) 471-6697 or Cell (904) 823-6478

Director of Christian Education: Phyllis Wolfe (904) 540-0227

Director of Youth Ministries: TBA

Northeast District Superintendent:

Durwood Foshee, District Superintendent (904) 396-3026

St. Augustine Police Department: (904) 825-1074

St. Johns County Sheriff’s Office: (904) 824-8304

Florida Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-96 ABUSE (1-800-962-2873) Florida Conference

Department for Ministry Protection 1-800-282-8011

Florida Conference Communications / Media Office: Frank North 1-800-282-8011

APPENDIX V

PARTICIPATION COVENANT STATEMENT

The congregation of 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.

No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (either sexual abuse, physical abuse, or emotional abuse) should work with children or youth in any church-sponsored activity.

All adults 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.

All adults involved with children and youth of our church shall observe the Child Protection Policy at all times.

All adults involved with children and youth of our church shall attend regular training and educational events provided by the church to keep volunteers informed of church policies and laws regarding child abuse.

All adults involved with children and youth of our church shall immediately report to their supervisor any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.

Please answer each of 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

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

Signature of Applicant

Date

Video Date: _____

***This covenant must be renewed annually.**