



**POLICY STATEMENT
FOR THE PROTECTION OF PERSONS INVOLVED IN
CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES**

Mount Auburn United Methodist Church is a spiritual community which takes seriously its responsibility to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children and youth who participate in our ministries. All volunteers and employees who are in leadership roles in these ministries are living out the vows we take in baptism to nurture our children and youth in the Christian faith. Every church worker plays a key role in fostering the spiritual development of individuals and families in our Church community.

The disturbing and traumatic rise of physical and sexual abuse of children has claimed the attention of our nation and society. Equally disturbing are well-publicized reports of false accusations directed at youth workers. The following statements reflect the commitment of Mount Auburn United Methodist Church to provide a safe environment for all children and youth who participate in Church-sponsored activities and the volunteers and staff members who lead such activities. This policy applies to all Church-sponsored activities.

In an effort to provide a safe community, Mount Auburn United Methodist Church requires all Church workers to commit themselves to the Children and Youth Ministries Protective Policy, adopted by the Charge Conference of Mount Auburn United Methodist Church. In so doing, Church workers will be asked to provide personal information, review the Church policy, and understand that they will be under the supervision of their respective leaders.

Any sexual contact or interaction (i.e., indecent exposure and liberties, communication for immoral purposes, fondling, rape, etc.) between a Church worker and children or youth is abusive. Force, threats, bribery, misrepresenting right and wrong are some of the ways this crime is perpetrated. Even if a child or youth, out of ignorance, innocence, or fear does not resist, it is still abuse.

This policy covers: the recruiting and selecting of Church workers, the supervision of Church workers, reporting procedures, and response procedures.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES PROTECTIVE POLICY

**Adopted by the Administrative Board of
Mount Auburn United Methodist Church**

July 24, 2000 and Revised July 9, 2009

1. **Definitions.**

- Adult shall mean an adult, aged 18 years or older.
- Adult Volunteer shall mean an Adult who volunteers to work (on an uncompensated basis) in a supervisory capacity in a Mount Auburn ministry involving children and youth.
- Children and Youth shall mean all individuals who are not Adults.
- Non-related Person shall mean two individuals who are Adult Volunteers and who are not married to each other; or two individuals who are Adult Volunteers who are not parent and child to each other; two individuals who are Adult Volunteers who are not siblings to each other. See the Two-Person Rule under section 4.
- Paid Staff Member shall mean any employee of Mount Auburn United Methodist Church, including employees of the Daycare and Preschool Ministries, pastors and other paid staff members, and shall also include non-employees who make regular use of Church facilities on a compensated basis (.e.g music instruction).
- Worker except to the extent further limited for purposes of Section 4, shall mean a Paid Staff Member, an Adult Volunteer, or a Youth Worker.
- Youth Worker shall mean a person between the ages of 14 and 18, who is otherwise performing the services described above as services performed by an Adult Volunteer.

2. **General Rule.**

- a. Workers with Children and Youth shall:
- i. Complete the Screening Process described in Section 3,
 - ii. Perform their duties in accordance with the provisions of Section 4, and
 - iii. Comply with the reporting and response requirements described in Section 5.

- b. Penalty for Non-Compliance: Workers who fail to comply with the provisions of Section 2.a. will be excluded from participation in Children and Youth Ministries at Mount Auburn United Methodist Church. Paid Staff Members who fail to comply with the provisions of Section 2.a. shall be subject to dismissal.

3. Screening Procedures.

- a. To undertake or maintain status as a Worker, the Worker shall annually review the policy (during the 60 day period ending September 1):
 - i. Participate in a training session concerning this Protective Policy.
- b. Police background checks shall be completed by paid staff that are assigned with this responsibility by Staff/Parish:
 - i. On all Paid Staff Members, and
 - ii. On all Adult Volunteers who are going on an overnight activity with children or youth or who are mentoring children or youth.
 - iii. At the discretion of the Children's Ministries Director, on any other Worker (other than a Paid Staff Member).
- c. Reference checks shall be completed on all Adult Volunteers working with children or youth.
- d. Results of police background and reference checks shall be maintained confidentially.
- e. Workers who have been convicted of either sexual or physical abuse of children or youth, or who have a history of inappropriate conduct with children and youth, will not be accepted as, or will be terminated from the status of, Workers.

4. Performance of Duties

- a. Definitions. For purposes of this Section 4:
 - i. Classroom Setting shall mean
 - (1) In the case of Daycare/Preschool, operating during normal established hours of operation,
 - (2) The Sunday School hour, and
 - (3) Bible School.
 - (4) Cornerstone

- ii. Non-Classroom Setting shall mean any ministry involving Children or Youth under the auspices of Mount Auburn United Methodist Church not conducted in a Classroom Setting.

There are two parts regarding the location and time of the activities. One part refers to youth groups, children's choir/band, or care of children during adult activities. These activities are conducted on the Mt. Auburn United Methodist Church campus but are not conducted during the Sunday service times when many people are in the building.

The second part of the Non-Classroom Setting refers to children and youth activities which occur in a setting away from the Mt. Auburn United Methodist Church campus.

- iii. Non-Program Building Use shall mean use of the building or grounds of Mount Auburn United Methodist Church by a group or individual in an activity involving Children or Youth that is not conducted under the auspices of Mount Auburn United Methodist Church
- iv. The Two-Person rule is the requirement that, in a Non-Classroom Setting, two non-related Workers (as such term is specifically modified in Section 4.a.v.) who have successfully completed the Screening Process described in Section 3 shall be present at all times while the activity is conducted.
- v. The Six-Month Rule is the requirement that an Adult Volunteer has to have been attending Mount Auburn United Methodist Church for at least 6 months before he/she can volunteer with children or youth.
- vi. The Restroom Rule is the requirement that an individual child cannot be alone in a restroom with an Adult Volunteer.
- vii. Worker shall mean only an Adult Volunteer or a Paid Staff Member, provided however, that a Youth Volunteer may serve as a second Worker for purposes of the Two Person Rule. A Youth Volunteer may not serve by themselves or in an off-campus setting. (See Classroom Setting c below.)

- b. Non-Classroom Setting. Workers who perform their duties in Non-Classroom Settings shall observe the Two Person Rule at all times. The Two Person Rule requires that two Workers who have successfully completed the Screening Process described in Section 3 shall be present at all times while the activity is conducted. However, counseling may be done by a minister only.

To clarify, there must be two Adult Volunteers present (on premises and in close proximity for observation) when the Non-Classroom Setting is involved. They must be non-related and must have been attending Mount Auburn United Methodist Church for at least 6 months. In addition, a reference and background check must have been completed on each Adult Volunteer.

- c. Classroom Setting. At least one Worker (not a Youth Worker) who has successfully completed the Screening Process shall be present while the activity is being conducted. In addition, a supervisor of the activity (Day Care Director, Assistant Day Care Director, acting Day Care Director or Director of Children's Ministries , as the case may be) shall be present in the building while the Classroom Setting activity is being conducted. In the Classroom setting, the door must be open, or the door should have a window in it, or there should be a window next to the door.
- d. Non-Program Building Use. In the case of Non-Program Building Use:
- i. If the use by an organization having a child protection policy reasonably acceptable to the Children's Ministries Director, such use shall be excepted from the application of this policy, and
 - ii. In the case of Non-Program Building Use by individuals (e.g. for private music instruction) or organizations not having a reasonably acceptable child protection policy, such use shall be governed by the policies set forth for Non-Classroom Settings, unless such activity is being conducted during the hours of operation of a Classroom Setting activity, in which case the Classroom Setting activity rules shall apply. Adult individuals engaged in Non-Program Building Use shall be deemed Workers for Purposes of Section 3.

5. **Reporting and Response Obligations.**

a. All Workers shall follow:

- i. The guidelines and procedures for reported suspected incidents of abuse, as provided in Appendix B, and
- ii. The guidelines for responding to reported incidents of abuse, as provided in Appendix C.

b. Failure to follow the provisions of Section 5.a. shall be grounds for dismissal.

Appendix A

**Mount Auburn United Methodist Church
Children and Youth Ministries Protective Policy
Primary Screening Form for Work with Minors**

This form is to be completed by all applicants for any position (paid or volunteer) involving the supervision, custody, or care of our minors. It is not an employment application form. This form is used to help our Church provide a safe and secure environment for those children and youth who participate in our ministries and programs.

Personal Information

DATE: _____

NAME: _____
(Last) (First) (Middle)
(Identity must be confirmed with a valid driver's license or other photo ID.)

DO YOU HAVE A CURRENT DRIVER'S LICENSE?

_____ YES _____ NO LICENSE NUMBER _____

PRESENT ADDRESS: HOME PHONE _____

_____ WORK PHONE _____

_____ CELL PHONE _____

PLEASE INDICATE THE TYPE OF MINISTRY WORK AND WORK WITH MINORS YOUR PREFER:

THE DATE YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO BEGIN: _____

WHAT IS THE MINIMUM TIME COMMITMENT YOU CAN MAKE: _____

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CHARGED OR CONVICTED OF OR PLEADED GUILTY TO A CRIME/SEXUAL ABUSE? _____ YES _____ NO

(If yes, please explain – attach a separate page, if necessary.)

WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO SIGN A RELEASE WHICH WOULD PERMIT A POLICE BACKGROUND CHECK? _____ YES _____ NO
(If yes, sign release on next page).

IS THERE ANY FACT OR CIRCUMSTANCE INVOLVING YOUR BACKGROUND THAT WOULD CALL INTO QUESTION YOUR BEING ENTRUSTED WITH THE SUPERVISION, GUIDANCE, AND CARE OF MINORS?

_____ YES _____ NO
(If yes, please explain—attach a separate page, if necessary)

LIST ALL PREVIOUS CHURCH WORK INVOLVING MINORS. LIST EACH CHURCH'S NAME AND ADDRESS, THE TYPE OF WORK YOU DID , AND DATES (Attach separate pages, if necessary.)

LIST ALL PREVIOUS NON-CHURCH WORK INVOLVING MINORS. LIST EACH ORGANIZATION BY NAME AND ADDRESS, THE TYPE OF WORK YOU DID, AND DATES. (Attach separate pages, if necessary.)

LIST YOUR GIFTS, CALLINGS, TRAINING, EDUCATION, OR OTHER FACTORS THAT HAVE PREPARED YOU FOR WORK WITH MINORS:

REFERENCES

PLEASE LIST FOUR (4) REFERENCES—

PLEASE LIST THREE (3) PERSONAL REFERENCES (NOT EMPLOYERS, FORMER EMPLOYERS, OR RELATIVES)

AT LEAST TWO (2) OF THESE REFERENCES MUST BE FROM OUTSIDE MOUNT AUBURN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH.

THE FOURTH REFERENCE MUST BE AN EMPLOYER, OR FORMER EMPLOYER, IF APPLICABLE.

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

APPLICANT'S STATEMENT AND RELEASE

The information contained in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references or Churches listed in this application to give you any information they may have regarding my character and fitness for work with minors.

Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by the Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures of Mount Auburn United Methodist Church.

I further state that I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE FOREGOING RELEASE AND KNOW THE CONTENTS THEREOF AND I SIGN THIS RELEASE AS MY OWN FREE ACT. This is a legally binding agreement which I have read and understand.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____ WITNESS: _____

PARENT'S STATEMENT IF APPLICANT IS A MINOR

(A minor is a person under eighteen [18] years of age.)

If the applicant is a minor, a parent or legal guardian is required to also sign and affirm that the minor has not engaged in illegal activities.

To my knowledge _____ has not engaged in any
(full name)
illegal activity or child abuse of any kind, and I know no reason why he or she should not work with minors at Mount Auburn United Methodist Church.

PARENT OR GUARDIAN: _____ DATE: _____

WITNESS: _____

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP

I understand that this application form and all parts of this file are the sole property of the Mount Auburn United Methodist Church and are not available for the applicant to review.

SIGNATURE: _____
(applicant or parent/guardian, if applicant is a minor)

DATE: _____ WITNESS: _____

**THIS PAGE IS TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICANTS FOR
EMPLOYMENT ONLY**

FROM: Mount Auburn United Methodist Church
TO: Johnson County Sheriff's Department

REQUEST FOR LIMITED CRIMINAL HISTORY

_____ Inspection (visual examination of record)

_____ Release (copy of record furnished)

Name of Subject: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____

Social Security Number: _____

PURPOSE FOR WHICH THE INFORMATION IS REQUESTED:

I grant my permission for the Mount Auburn United Methodist Church to run this request for a limited criminal history. I do not hold them liable for any information which is disclosed.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(applicant)

I, _____, certify that the foregoing request for a limited criminal history of _____ will be used solely for the purpose specified in this request and for no other purpose.

Signature: _____ Date _____

Title: _____

Appendix B

Mount Auburn United Methodist Church Children and Youth Ministries Protective Policy

REPORTING PROCEDURES

Indiana law requires a person to immediately report suspected and reported child abuse to the authorities, and in organizations such as Mount Auburn United Methodist Church, to the appropriate individual in charge. A person who fails to do so can be prosecuted for a Class B misdemeanor or, in extreme circumstances, may be subject to civil liability for money damages. Therefore, all employees and volunteers at Mount Auburn United Methodist Church must adhere to the following procedures:

1. In the event of suspected, reported, or discovered child abuse or violation of the Child Protection Guidelines of Mount Auburn United Methodist Church, the employee or volunteer shall immediately notify the Senior Pastor or, in the absence of the Senior Pastor, the Associate Pastor, the Youth Director, the Director of Children's Ministries, or the Daycare/Preschool Director who shall make a report to the local child protection service or law enforcement agency. (Call the Johnson County Division of Family and Children at 738-0301, and ask for the caseworker on call. On evenings and weekends, call the Johnson County Sheriff's Department at 736-5155.)

*Physical signs of molestation may include:

- Lacerations and bruises
- Irritation, pain, or injury to the genital area
- Difficulty with urination
- Discomfort when sitting
- Torn or bloody underclothing
- Venereal disease

*Behavioral signs of molestation may include:

Nightmares

Anxiety when approaching the Church building, nursery, or preschool area (beyond normal separation anxiety)

Nervous or hostile behavior toward adults

Sexual self-consciousness or acting out of sexual behavior

Withdrawal from Church activities and friends

*Verbal signs of molestation may include statements such as:

“I don’t like _____.”

“_____ does things to me when we’re alone.”

“I don’t like to be alone with _____.”

“_____ fooled around with me.”

*Adapted from Child Abuse: Governing Law and Legislation, by I. Sloan (1983)

2. Reports shall be documented in writing with the date of the report, the time of the report, the telephone number to which the report was made, the name of the recipient of the report, and a brief synopsis of the report. If at all possible, all oral reporting will be done in the presence of a recorded witness.
3. All Church employees and volunteers working with minor children will receive training at the beginning of each new Church administrative year regarding the signs of child abuse, including child sexual abuse, and the steps to report any and all suspected child abuse.

Appendix C
**Mount Auburn United Methodist Church
Children and Youth Ministries
Protective Policy**

RESPONSE PROCEDURES

1. The official spokesperson for Mount Auburn United Methodist Church shall be the Senior Pastor, or in the absence of the Senior Pastor—the Associate Pastor, the Youth Director, the Director of Children’s Ministries, or the Daycare/Preschool Director. All inquiries or requests for information from the media, attorneys, or any other parties shall be referred to the official spokesperson. No person other than the official spokesperson is to release any information regarding any alleged incident of child abuse without the express approval of the official spokesperson.
2. The official spokesperson shall immediately report any alleged incident of child abuse to the Johnson County Division of Family and Children or the Sheriff’s Department (on weekend or evenings), our insurance carrier, the Conference Chancellor, and the District Superintendent.
3. The care and safety of the victim is our first priority. We will not confront the accused without the approval of the Division of Family and Children or the law enforcement authorities.
4. We will not prejudge any person accused, but we will take any allegation of child abuse seriously and will reach out in Christian love and support to the victim and the victim’s family, extending whatever pastoral care resources are needed. We will fully cooperate with any authorities investigating an allegation of child abuse.
5. We will treat the accused with dignity and respect. If the accused is a Church worker, that person will be temporarily relieved of his or her duties until the investigation is finished and the person has been cleared by the authorities. If the accused is a paid employee of Mount Auburn United Methodist Church, his or her income will be maintained until the allegations are cleared by the authorities or until criminal charges are filed.
6. All communication by the official spokesperson to the media, congregation, and public will protect the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.
7. All efforts in responding to the alleged incident of child abuse shall be documented by the Senior Pastor, or in the absence of the Senior Pastor—the Associate Pastor, the Youth Director, the Daycare/Pre-School Director, or the Director of Children’s Ministries-- and maintained in a secure and confidential file.