

***POLICY AND PROCEDURES
EMPLOYEES AND WORKERS
CHILDREN & YOUTH PROGRAMS***

POLICY: In order to provide a safe and secure environment for our church family and to minimize the church's, employees' and workers' vulnerability to accusation, we have adopted the following procedures.

PROCEDURE: To further this policy, and to reduce the likelihood of false accusations against employees and workers, the following procedures will be **strictly enforced** by the Vineyard Church of Ann Arbor.

Worker Screening

- (a) Prior to consideration for appointment any candidate who would be working with children or youth will complete and return a 'Children & Youth Worker Initial Application'.
- (b) The 'Children & Youth Worker Initial Application' will be carefully reviewed by a pastoral representative or designate to make certain that the worker will be appropriate for the ministry position, based on the information provided. The 'Initial Application for Children and Youth Worker Screening Process' shall be followed.
- (c) If the person would be appropriate for the ministry work, then at least two references will be checked to confirm the information provided on the 'Children & Youth Worker Initial Application'. A record of the reference check will be maintained on the 'Record of contact with a reference or church identified by and applicant for children & youth work' form.
- (d) In addition, a criminal background check may be performed through our state law enforcement agency with respect to all candidates. The motor vehicle driving record of candidates reasonably expected to drive vehicles containing children or youth will be reviewed. Other candidates will NOT be permitted to drive motor vehicles containing children or youth.

Employee Screening

- (a) The same screening procedure set forth for workers will apply to **all** potential employees, regardless of the ministry position for which they are being considered.

- (b) In addition, a criminal background check may be performed through our state law enforcement agency with respect to all candidates for employment.

Waiting Period

No worker candidate (other than employees) will be considered for any ministry position involving children or youth until the candidate has been regularly attending services for six months or more, or has become a member of the church.

Supervision

- (a) At least two adults (at least one over the age of 21) should be present at every function, and in each classroom, of every child or youth ministry program.
- (b) At least two ushers will be appointed to supervise activity during each weekend church service on the premises outside of the room where services are held.
- (c) For children under the age of six, supervisors should arrive at least 10 minutes before a scheduled activity and should keep watch over those in their care until all have been picked up by a parent or guardian. Do not send children out to find their parents, and do not release any child to await transportation etc...
- (d) It is understood that at times other adults may be present at children / youth events. It is expected that those approved children / youth workers will exercise additional vigilance in these situations to ensure the protection of children / youth participants.

Work Restrictions

- (a) For those children over the age of five who require assistance, and at the discretion of the children's worker supervising, one adult woman should take girls to the rest room and one adult man shall take boys to the rest room, waiting outside.
- (b) Children five years of age or younger (boys and girls) should be assisted as in the rest room by an adult woman. (standing outside the stall with the door ajar).
- (c) Workers should never touch a person's private body parts except when necessary, as in the case of changing a diaper.
- (d) Workers should avoid the appearance of impropriety such as sitting older children on their lap, kissing or embracing others, etc.
- (e) Workers are to release children under the age of six in their care only to parents, guardians or persons specifically authorized to pick up the person.

- (f) A photo system is implemented to ensure that children under the age of three are released only to those authorized.

Discipline

- (a) Workers are never to spank, hit, grab, shake, or otherwise physically discipline anyone except for the use of the minimum physical restraint to insure the safety of the child and others. Corporal punishment of any kind may not be used.
- (b) Disciplinary problems should be reported to the ministry leader.

Injuries or Illness

- (a) Workers have the authority to exclude any child / youth based on illness.
- (b) Participants should be returned to their parent or guardian as soon as an illness is discovered. If this is not possible then the person who is ill should be isolated in a manner that will allow supervision to continue until the person can be returned to their parent or guardian.
- (c) Reasonable steps should be taken to avoid contact with body fluids of any kind.
- (d) Persons who have received an injury that is obviously minor should be given first aid as needed at the time of the injury. The person's parent or guardian should be notified of the minor injury when they pick up the injured person.
- (e) Any injury, which may require medical treatment beyond simple first aid, should be given immediate attention. The parent or guardian of the injured person should be immediately notified, along with the ministry leader. An ambulance should be called immediately if warranted by the injury.
- (f) The ministry leader who becomes aware of an injury requiring medical treatment (beyond simple first aid), will inform the appropriate board member of the Vineyard Church of Ann Arbor church board, who if appropriate, will see that an attorney is promptly contacted to provide a written opinion as to what further steps should be taken. The written opinion should be obtained within 24 hours of when the worker, Senior Pastor or board member first becomes aware of the injury.
- (g) Upon notice of injury, if appropriate, the insurance carrier, (general or professional liability insurance) must be promptly notified, as well as any organization entity to such the organization has a duty report such allegations.

Record Keeping

- (a) An attendance list should be kept for all Vineyard Christian Fellowship functions involving Children's Ministry. The date of the function, along with the names of a participants and workers should be kept.

- (b) Children / Youth may only be provided with medication when parental authorization has been specifically given.

Notice of Abuse or Molestation

- (a) Workers who become aware of any abuse or molestation connected to any Vineyard Church of Ann Arbor activity will IMMEDIATELY inform their ministry leader of such abuse or molestation.
- (b) Any ministry leader who becomes aware of any abuse or molestation connected to any activity will immediately inform the Senior Pastor of such abuse or molestation.
- (d) A pastor who becomes aware of abuse or molestation of a participant will immediately inform the participant's parent or guardian of the abuse or molestation. The pastor will inform the appropriate member of the Vineyard Church of Ann Arbor church board who will see that an attorney is promptly contacted to provide a written opinion as to whether the organization should report the abuse or molestation to law enforcement authorities. The written opinion should be obtained within 24 hours of when the worker, Senior Pastor or board member first becomes aware of the abuse or molestation.
- (e) Upon notice of abuse or molestation, the insurance carrier, (general or professional liability insurance) must be promptly notified, as well as any organizational entity to which to whom the organization has a duty to report such allegations.

Violation of Policy or Procedures

- (a) Workers will promptly notify their ministry leader of any activity undertaken or information received on their own behalf or by others, which violates this policy or procedure or poses a potential threat to children / youth.
- (b) Any ministry leader or pastor who becomes aware of a violation of the policy or procedures will take steps necessary to ensure future compliance with the policy and procedures by all workers.
- (c) Workers will be removed from their position if such removal is warranted, or if the worker poses a potential threat to others.
- (d) The details of any action or investigation will be fully documented, but remain confidential.

Internal "Investigation"

- (a) Any allegation of abuse or molestation will be taken seriously and will be investigated by Vineyard Church of Ann Arbor pastoral staff.

- (b) Any employee who is the subject of investigation will be removed from their position with pay pending completion of the investigation (unless the employee has admitted to the abuse or molestation in which case they will be terminated in accordance with organizational employment practices).
- (c) (c) Any worker who is the subject to the investigation will be removed from their position pending completion of the investigation.
- (d) Any person who is found guilty of alleged abuse or molestation will be removed from work with children or youth, within the organization.
- (e) (e) The details of any action or investigation will be fully documented.

Dealing with Law Enforcement / Media

- (a) Legal counsel will be contacted as soon as possible after the organization receives notice of abuse or molestation in connection with organization activities.
- (b) Staff and volunteers will cooperate fully with any law enforcement or governmental agency that may be investigating allegations of injury, abuse or molestation in connection with activities of the organization.
- (c) A single board member will be designated as spokesperson following notice of any abuse or molestation in connection with activities of the organization. This spokesperson will be the only person to convey information concerning situation and will convey no more information than is necessary under the circumstances.

Review of Policy / Procedures

- (a) This policy and procedures will be conveyed for review annually to all workers, employees, and ministry leaders to whom it applies.
- (b) Training will be provided at least annually on the subject of providing a safe environment for children and youth while participating in Vineyard Church of Ann Arbor activities. A record detailing the training provided names of trainer(s) and names of participants will be maintained. Individuals who do not participate in this training at least once per year will not be permitted to participate as children / youth workers.
- (c) 'Children & Youth Worker Applications – Annual Renewal' will be completed annually. This application will be used after the initial application has been completed (and is on file) by employees, children's workers and youth workers.
- (d) This policy and procedure can be modified in accordance with the by-laws of the organization. Any modification should be promptly conveyed to all persons affected by such modification.

Associated Documents

- (a) 'Children & Youth Worker Initial Application'.
 - (b) 'Children & Youth Worker Application Renewal'.
 - (c) 'Record of contact with a reference or church identified by and applicant for children or youth work'.
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I acknowledge that I have read and agree to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in the ***POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR EMPLOYEES AND WORKERS CHILDREN & YOUTH PROGRAMS*** document.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____