

# **St. Andrew Presbyterian Church**

## **Iowa City, Iowa**

### **Child Protection Policy Summary**

At its December 20, 2012 meeting, the Session approved a Child Protection Policy which includes the statement:

*“We affirm that children and youth are a gift from God and that the future of the church rests with them. We further affirm that it is the church’s obligation to protect their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well being. The abuse of children will not be tolerated in any form by the action of any individual. The abuse may be defined as physical, emotional, spiritual, or sexual. All are prohibited.”*

#### **THE SCREENING PROCESS**

All those who volunteer to work with children and/or youth must complete the Volunteer Application and give permission to the Child Protection Committee to do a background check. The background check will include a check of the appropriate state sex offender registries.

As part of the screening process, any volunteer who provides automobile transportation as part of an event must be an adult and must have completed the Vehicle Operator Application for Volunteers. Drivers must have a valid driver’s license and automobile liability insurance.

Drivers for church-sponsored activities need not follow the Two-Adult-Rule (see below) if there are always at least two children/youth in the car or written permission has been given by the parents of the child/youth being transported. All occupants of the vehicle must wear a seatbelt if seatbelts are available in the vehicle.

#### **TWO-ADULT RULE**

A minimum of two adults should be present to supervise each church activity involving ten or more children and/or youth. When it is not possible to comply with the two adult rule, an adult must follow the rule of having at least three persons (including children or youth) present at all times. Except for pastoral counseling or music lessons, at no time should a child or youth be alone with an adult. One-on-one pastoral counseling sessions are permitted, but only if the room or office door is kept ajar, or a glass or clear panel is installed into the door that allows the pastor to be visible at all times. In the case of individual music or voice lessons, the same rule applies and written parental consent is required.

#### **SIX-MONTH RULE**

Volunteers must be members or actively affiliated with the church for at least six months before being permitted to work with children and/or youth.

#### **YOUNGER HELPERS**

Individuals under age 19 are permitted to help with children/or youth activities, but the Two-Adult-Rule still applies. Children and youth do not have to go through the same screening procedure as adults.

#### **REPORTING ABUSE**

All volunteers are to report any incident of apparent or suspected child abuse that they observe to the Director in charge of the event or program where the incident took place or to the Pastor , and to the Child Protection Committee. The church will report all allegations of child abuse to the local police department and/or the Iowa Department of Human Services.

#### **FURTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT CHILD PROTECTION**

The forgoing is a summary. The complete Child Protection Policy is available to any church member or volunteer who requests it. Questions about the Child Protection Policy should be directed to the Child Protection Committee.

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VOLUNTEERS AND PAID STAFF

### Working with Children or Youth

I consider this a vow before God, and a covenant between me and Saint Andrew Presbyterian Church, the children and youth with whom I will be working, and their families.

- While working with children and youth, I will conduct myself as a Christian called to service in God’s Kingdom.
- I understand that I have been entrusted with the safety and welfare of all children and youth assigned to me. At all times, I will guard their physical safety and mental, emotional, and bodily health.
- I understand that I have been entrusted with the spiritual health of all the children and youth assigned to me.
- I will take care of my own physical and spiritual health.
- I understand that I must be careful of questionable or “suggestive” situations. I will abide by the two-adult rule. If a child or youth requests time alone with me, I will inform the other adult supervisor and will meet with the child or youth in sight of others, but not necessarily where others can hear us.
- I will never touch a child or youth in anger.
- I will use appropriate signs of affection and Christian caring. I will respect the feelings of those who do not enjoy even the slightest casual touch.
- I will guard my language. I will not swear or use inappropriate language in the presence of children and youth.
- I will set a good example by respecting the property of the church, any off-site location of a church event, and of others and will be a good steward of God’s earth.
- I will immediately report any behavior toward a child or youth that seems to be abusive or otherwise inappropriate.

I have read and understand the above Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its provisions, as well as the provisions of the Child Protection Policy and Procedures, a copy of which I have received and reviewed.

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Signature

Date

**APPLICATION FOR VOLUNTEERS WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND/OR YOUTH**

Note: Volunteers must complete this application before engaging in a church activity.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Include other legal names used in prior 7 years.)

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street City State Zip

**Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact** Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Info:** Evening Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Previous Addresses (Last 7 years):**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Street City State Zip Dates Lived at Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Street City State Zip Dates Lived at Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Street City State Zip Dates Lived at Address

**Have you been a member of SAPC for at least 6 months?** Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

**If not a member, date you began attending (MM/YY):** \_\_\_\_\_

**References:**

**Please provide contact information for places you have worked with children and/or youth as an employee or volunteer:**

From	Organization or Person's Name/ Contact Person/ Address/Telephone	Job Title or Volunteer Position
To		Reason for Leaving
From	Organization or Person's Name/ Contact Person/ Address/Telephone	Job Title or Volunteer Position
To		Reason for Leaving
From	Organization or Person's Name/ Contact Person/ Address/Telephone	Job Title or Volunteer Position
To		Reason for Leaving

Have you ever been convicted of, or pleaded guilty or no contest to, even if expunged, any crime related to child abuse, sexual abuse, substance abuse, or crimes of violence? **YES NO**

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

Note: If you have been a victim of physical or sexual abuse or molestation, and you feel this experience could affect your ability to work with children or youth, you are encouraged to confidentially discuss your interest in volunteering with a pastor before accepting this assignment.

I authorize the church to thoroughly investigate my experience in working with children and/or youth either as a staff member or volunteer and any other matters related to my suitability for working with children and/or youth. I further authorize former institutions, organizations or individuals where I worked as a staff member or volunteer to disclose to the church all information they may have concerning my suitability to work with children and/or youth. In addition, I hereby release the church, my former employers, and all other organizations and persons from any and all claims, demands, or liabilities arising out of, or in any way related to, such disclosure.

Upon my acceptance as a volunteer working with children and/or youth, I agree to be bound by the provisions of the Child Protection Policy of this church. I further state that I have carefully read the foregoing release and know and understand its contents. I sign this release of my own free will, and I understand that it is a legally binding agreement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Vehicle Operator Application (Please complete this section if you will, or possibly will, be operating a motor vehicle as a volunteer, transporting children or youth to and/or from an activity.)**

Do you have a valid driver's license? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a valid CDL? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, what class? \_\_\_\_\_

Has your license been suspended or revoked in the last 10 years? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been convicted of, or pleaded guilty to, or no contest to, even if expunged, operating a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs or alcohol or moving violations, or have you been found to be at fault in a traffic accident(s) in the last 10 years? (A positive response will not automatically disqualify an applicant.) YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please describe and provide date(s) (MM/YY): \_\_\_\_\_

Do you carry automobile insurance in an amount no less than \$100,000 per occurrence/\$300,000 aggregate that would cover you and your passengers when driving youth or children to church-sponsored events? (The church's liability insurance does not cover staff or volunteer drivers.)

YES \_\_\_\_\_

NO \_\_\_\_\_

All passengers in any vehicle operated by me shall wear seat belts while the vehicle is moving, if seat belts are available in the vehicle, and I will not allow more passengers to ride in the vehicle than the capacity specified by the vehicle's manufacturer.

I hereby authorize the church to run a Motor Vehicle Records check on me. I also authorize the organization responsible for maintaining such records to release them to the church.

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Signature

Date