

# Child Protection Guidelines

**Pfrimmer's Chapel United Methodist Church  
Child Protection Guidelines  
Adopted by the Church Council of Pfrimmer's Chapel  
United Methodist Church**



1. All volunteers/employees, who work with children/youth, must undergo a training and Screening Process prior to beginning work. The forms to be used in the Screening Process are labeled "Appendix C". Any questionable incident that appears during the screening process will be given to the Pastor. It is then at the discretion of the pastor if the applicant is allowed to work with children/youth.
2. For purposes of these Guidelines: Child(ren) is defined as anyone age 12 and under. Youth is defined as anyone ages 13 thru 17. Adult is defined as anyone age 18 or older.
3. Persons in charge of supervising children/youth must be 18 years or older. Youth may lead children as long as they have attended Child Protection Training and there is an adult supervisor present at the church sponsored event or program (as in VBS group leaders). Children (12 and under) may assist the supervisor, however this is at the discretion of the supervisor.
4. Any person who has been convicted of a crime against children/youth or those who have a history of inappropriate conduct with children/youth will not be employed and shall not volunteer to supervise children/youth in any church-sponsored activity or program.
5. Volunteers/employees shall observe the "two-person rule" or the "open door policy" at ALL times. The "two-person rule" requires that persons supervising children/youth shall make every reasonable effort to avoid situations where the supervisor is alone with children/youth without a partner.
6. Volunteers/employees shall never leave a child, 12 and under, unsupervised.
7. Parents shall never leave a child age 12 and under, unsupervised. Children left unattended will be taken to their parent or taken to a group setting.
8. Restroom supervision: During church service, parent or guardian should accompany children age 12 and under to the restroom.
9. Field Trip Restroom Supervision: No child/youth regardless of age should ever enter a bathroom alone on a field trip. Always send children/youth in pairs. Children (in pairs) must also be accompanied by an adult.
10. Private activities recommended to be conducted in pairs include diapering and helping toddlers pull their pants up after using the toilet. When this is not feasible, the person should be positioned so that they are visible to others.
11. No person shall abuse children, including:
  - physical abuse: strike, spank, shake, slap;
  - verbal abuse: humiliate, degrade, threaten;
  - sexual abuse: inappropriate touch or verbal exchange;
  - mental abuse: shaming, withholding love, cruelty;
  - neglect: withholding food, water, basic care.Any type of abuse will not be tolerated and may be cause for immediate dismissal as a volunteer with children.
12. Volunteers/employees must use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement, rather than competition, comparison and criticism. Volunteers/employees will have age appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline. Physical restraint is used only in pre-determined situations (necessary to protect the child/youth or other children/youth from harm), is only administered in a manner prescribed by the parent and must be documented in writing (file a report immediately after incident; follow procedures included in guidelines).
13. Volunteers/employees will respect children/youth's rights to not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their right to say no. Other than diapering, children are not to be touched in areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.
14. Volunteers/employees will treat all children/youth equally.
15. Volunteers/employees will refrain from inappropriate intimate displays of affection towards others in the presence of children/youth or their parents.

16. Volunteers/employees must appear clean, neat and modestly attired.
17. Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one's personal life, and any kind of harassment in the presence of children/youth or their parents is prohibited.
18. Volunteers/employees may not smoke or use tobacco in the presence of children/youth.
19. Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during church activities is prohibited.
20. Volunteers/employees must be free of physical or psychological conditions that might adversely affect children/youth's physical or mental health. If in doubt, the pastor or PPR chair should be consulted.
21. Volunteers/employees will portray a positive role model for children/youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity.
22. Adult volunteers/employees may not date children/youth under the age of 18 years.
23. Under no circumstances should volunteers/employees release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian (written authorization on file with the church). Must have sign in/sign out sheets for all activities involving children age 12 and under. Parents must promptly pick up children from Sunday School at 10:45 am.
24. Annual training in these guidelines as well as state guidelines regarding recognizing and reporting child abuse is mandatory. This training will take place on the last Sunday in April unless it falls on a holiday. If it falls on a holiday, the training will take place on the following Sunday. Additional training dates will be provided as necessary.
25. Our guidelines and procedures for reporting suspected incidents of abuse or any behavior which seems abusive or inappropriate are labeled "Appendix A". These guidelines and procedures are intended to be in accordance with the Indiana mandatory reporting law. Where they may differ, the IC statutes shall take precedence.
26. Our guidelines and procedures for responding to reported incidents of abuse are labeled "Appendix B".
27. It is the church's policy that all employees and volunteers adhere to both God's laws and man's laws to create a loving and caring environment for all children/youth.

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

Implementation of this policy and annual child protection training is the responsibility of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee.

**Appendix A:**  
Pfrimmer's Chapel United Methodist Church  
Child Protection Guidelines - Reporting Procedures

Indiana Law requires a person to immediately report suspected child abuse to the authorities and, in organizations such as Pfrimmer's Chapel 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 Pfrimmer's Chapel 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 Pfrimmer's Chapel United Methodist Church, the employee or volunteer shall immediately notify the pastor or, the following individuals in this exact order, (1) the Chairperson of the Pastor Parish Relations Committee, (2) the head of the Administrative Council or Board when the pastor is absent. The only time the third person (head of the Administrative Council or Board) will be utilized to accept a report will be that the other two persons are unavailable or unacceptable for some specific reason. In the event of suspected, reported or discovered child abuse or neglect, one of the individuals named above will call the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-800-5556. If this line is not available then the Harrison County Sheriff will be called at 738-2195.

The above mentioned individuals will also be designated as the only official spokespersons for Pfrimmer's Chapel United Methodist Church. A verbal report will be made to the Child Abuse Hotline (or Harrison County Sheriff) by the official spokesperson within 24 hours of any report, and a written report will be made within 48 hours.

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 (Pastor, PPR Chair or Chair of Admin Board).
3. ALL reports written or oral shall be kept in the strictest confidence by all those present during the report. The written reports will be kept in a locked cabinet/container with its access strictly limited to only those individuals mentioned previously as "official spokespersons".

**Appendix B**  
Pfrimmer's Chapel United Methodist Church  
Child Protection Guidelines - Response Procedure

1. The official spokesperson of Pfrimmer's Chapel United Methodist Church shall be the Pastor, or in the absence of the Pastor, the previously designated spokesperson (see Appendix A). All inquiries or requests for information from the media, attorneys, or any other parties will 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 care and safety of the victim is our first priority. We will not confront the accused without the approval of the Child Protection Service or law enforcement authorities.
3. 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 of 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.
4. We will treat the accused with dignity and respect. If the accused is a volunteer/employee, that person shall be temporarily relieved of his or her duties until the investigation is finished and the person has been cleared by authorities. If the accused is a paid employee of the church, his or her income will be maintained until the allegations are cleared by authorities or until criminal charges are filed.
5. All communication by the official spokesperson to the media, congregation and public will protect the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.
6. All efforts in responding to the allegations shall be documented by the Pastor, or, in the absence of the Pastor, by the previously designated spokesperson and maintained in a secure and confidential file.