

Two Rivers United Methodist Church
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Approved by Leadership Council 23 August 2016.

The following policy has been established at the above church in order to protect our young people (ages 17 and under) from undue risk of verbal, physical, and sexual abuse and misconduct, and to protect our staff and volunteers who work with children and youth from false accusations. This policy must be followed to allow our ministries to young people to be the best that is possible.

1. All employed adults, youth, and volunteers, who work with minors or request to work with minors, must be evaluated and approved before beginning work. Individuals applying for a paid or volunteer position will be required to:

- complete a volunteer or employment application form (Attachments 1 and 2), which includes three (3) professional / personal references, who can attest to character and performance of duties similar to those the applicant is seeking,
- complete a confidential form listing any criminal activity and granting permission for a background check of criminal records (Inquirehire Safety First Background Check Program),
- complete an interview with staff or ministry coordinator, as appropriate, and
- review this policy and sign a copy for file indicating understanding and agreement.

The Children and Youth Ministry Team is responsible for evaluating volunteer workers for activities under their purview. Parents who are not pre-approved volunteers, but who accompany their children at church-sponsored activities, remain responsible for their own children. The Staff / Parish Committee is responsible for evaluating paid employees as part of the interview and job offer process. The Inquirehire Safety First Background Check Program will be used for volunteer and employee background checks. The pastor and church Secretary / Office Manager will maintain the confidentiality of the information obtained during these background checks.

2. Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age and / or a minimum of five (5) years older than the oldest member of the children's or youth group in which she / he volunteers. Teens at least 13 years of age who complete appropriate training and have approval on file may volunteer in the Nursery. Volunteers must be members or regular attendees of Two Rivers United Methodist Church for a minimum of six months before being eligible to work as a teacher or a volunteer to work with children and youth. These requirements may be waived after the suitability of the applicant's references and other background information are verified. This policy covers all who work with children / youth activities including childcare while meetings take place.

3. Those working with children and youth in organized activities will ensure meeting locations are observable and interruptible. Ideally, the "two-person rule" will be in effect. The "two-person rule" requires that employees, volunteers, and supervisors should avoid situations where only one worker is alone with children or youth. Whether or not the two-person rule is feasible or practical, the "open view rule" must be observed. The "open view rule" requires the interior of the occupied room to be visible to outside observers and the activity within the room to be interruptible. An open door, a split door with one half open, or an observation window or opening meets the requirements of the "open view rule". When a child in sixth grade or under needs to use the restroom, one adult will check the restroom before the child enters. The adult will wait outside the restroom to escort the child back to the room.

4. Christ-like discretion is necessary in regards to physical contact with young people. Handshakes, high fives, and pats on the arm or shoulder are acceptable by mutual consent. Side hugs initiated by a child or

youth are permissible provided the adult agrees. No physical contact should occur if child / youth or adult is uncomfortable.

5. Staff and volunteer ministry personnel should never remove a young person from church property, or take him or her home, without the verbal or written approval of the ministry's supervisor and the parent / guardian. When an adult provides transportation for a child or youth to his / her home, it is preferable that another adult ride along. If that is not possible, the adult driver will contact the applicable parent(s) and tell them the time of departure from the church and the expected time of arrival at the child's / youth's home, and / or the child / youth may call and speak with his / her parent by cellphone during the drive from church to home.

6. If a child is injured or alleges harm, an Incident Report must be completed and the parent or guardian notified as soon as possible on the day of the incident. At minimum, the report must include a description of the injury or alleged harm, the immediate care given, and witnesses to the event. More information will be included as the situation requires. See Incident Report form. (Attachment 3)

7. If children or youth are involved in a physical confrontation in the church or at a church-sponsored event elsewhere, the adult(s) present will ask the offenders to stop, warning them that they will be separated if fighting continues. If the fighting does continue, the offenders should be separated and the adult(s) in charge or pastor immediately notified. As soon as possible on the day of the incident, an incident report shall be completed and provided to the office, and the offenders' parents will be notified of the incident by the pastor or adult in charge. If a minor attendee is harming other attendees during an event or is otherwise disrupting that event in a harmful manner, and the minor's parent or emergency contact is not immediately available, law enforcement officials should be contacted to remove that person from the premises.

8. Our church will not permit or sanction corporal punishment of any kind by its staff and volunteers. No one should ever use one-on-one physical force on a child by spanking, swatting, grabbing, or shaking as a means of discipline. Workers are not allowed to yell or scream in anger, or threaten a child through bodily motions that may scare them.

9. If a child / youth alleges abuse, has been harmed, or is suspected to be at risk of being harmed by abuse or neglect, an immediate call to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline at 800-25-ABUSE (800-252-2873 or TTY 1-800-358-5117) is mandatory. If a child is thought to be in immediate danger of harm, call 911 first. If a child expresses fear of parents or guardian or others in the home that is deemed reasonable, the Police should be contacted and the Guidelines for Dealing with Alleged Abusive Parent / Guardian should be used. (Attachment 4) A church incident report must be completed and notification of the incident to the pastor is required. Confidentiality must be maintained. The pastor will consult with the District Superintendent as deemed necessary and advise other church leaders as appropriate. If the alleged offender is a congregant, the pastor will notify the Council Chair; if the alleged offender is an employee, the pastor will notify the Staff / Parish Chair; if the alleged offender is a volunteer, the pastor will notify the leader of the volunteer ministry. During the investigation of the allegation, the employee or volunteer will step down from assigned duties and have no contact with children or youth in the church. If the alleged offender is the pastor, the Staff / Parish Chair will assume the lead in reporting to the District Superintendent, and the Two Rivers Sexual Harassment Policy will be applied if appropriate. If other church leaders are the alleged offenders, the pastor will use discretion in sharing information within the church. Confidentiality will consider the safety of our children and youth as well as the rights and dignity of the alleged offender.

10. Staff and volunteers are primarily responsible for children and youth from a designated drop-off point (e.g., nursery, Sunday school room, choir room) within the church to dismissal. Children through fourth grade will be released from activities only into the hands of a parent / guardian or designated adult. All nursery children must have a parent / guardian sign in the child when leaving them in the nursery or Sunday school room. When the parent / guardian returns to pick up the child, they must then sign the child out of the nursery and notify the nursery attendant / volunteer of their departure. It is the Nursery Attendant / Teacher's responsibility to introduce themselves to the parent / guardian and to insure the parent's / parents' name(s) and the child's / children's name(s) are recorded on the sign-in / sign-out sheet.

11. The pastor shall arrange for annual training of appropriate staff, ushers and youth workers on the Child Protection Policy, Two Rivers United Methodist Church Sex Offender Policy, and the Two Rivers United Methodist Church Sexual Harassment Policy, as well as, Mandated Reporter Training and conflict intervention / resolution training. Additional training sessions will be held as changes in personnel, policy, or circumstances dictate.

12. This policy shall be reviewed / revised and approved annually based on the date of last review / approval.

13. Reference the Two Rivers UMC Sex Offender Policy and Sexual Harassment Policy.

4 ATTACHMENTS

Application to Volunteer with Children or Youth at Two Rivers United Methodist Church

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

Town _____

Phone (home) _____

Phone (mobile) _____

Email _____

Are you a member of Two Rivers United Methodist Church? _____

How long have you been attending Two Rivers? _____

Briefly describe your experience working with children or youth, in both volunteer and professional capacities.

Please list three personal or professional references who will know something about your experience with children or youth.

Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____

Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____

Name _____

Phone _____

Address _____

Two Rivers UMC

1820 5th Avenue
Rock Island, Illinois 61201

Employment Application

Applicant Information

Full Name: _____ Date: _____
Last First M.I.

Address: _____
Street Address Apartment/Unit #

City State ZIP Code

Phone: _____ Email _____

Date Available: _____ Social Security No.: _____ Desired Salary: \$ _____

Position Applied for: _____

Are you a citizen of the United States? YES NO If no, are you authorized to work in the U.S.? YES NO

Have you ever worked for this company? YES NO If yes, when? _____

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? YES NO

If yes, explain: _____

Education

High School: _____ Address: _____

From: _____ To: _____ Did you graduate? YES NO Diploma: _____

College: _____ Address: _____

From: _____ To: _____ Did you graduate? YES NO Degree: _____

Other: _____ Address: _____

From: _____ To: _____ Did you graduate? YES NO Degree: _____

References

Please list three professional references.

Full Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Company: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Full Name: _____ Relationship: _____
Company: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____

Full Name: _____ Relationship: _____
Company: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____

Previous Employment

Company: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____ Supervisor: _____
Job Title: _____ Starting Salary: \$ _____ Ending Salary: \$ _____

Responsibilities: _____
From: _____ To: _____ Reason for Leaving: _____

May we contact your previous supervisor for a reference? YES NO

Previous Employment

Company: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____ Supervisor: _____
Job Title: _____ Starting Salary: \$ _____ Ending Salary: \$ _____

Responsibilities: _____
From: _____ To: _____ Reason for Leaving: _____

May we contact your previous supervisor for a reference? YES NO

Previous Employment

Company: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____ Supervisor: _____
Job Title: _____ Starting Salary: \$ _____ Ending Salary: \$ _____

Responsibilities: _____
From: _____ To: _____ Reason for Leaving: _____

May we contact your previous supervisor for a reference? YES NO

Military Service

Branch: _____ From: _____ To: _____

Rank at Discharge: _____ Type of Discharge: _____

If other than honorable, explain: _____

Disclaimer and Signature

I certify that my answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

If this application leads to employment, I understand that false or misleading information in my application or interview may result in my release.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Incident Report

This report is to be completed by the person in charge at the time of the incident and delivered to the church office as soon as possible on the day of the incident.

Child's Name _____ Age: _____ Date: _____

Time: _____ Where did the incident happen: _____

Describe the incident, including the names of witnesses:

What first aid was given:

By whom: _____

Parent or Guardian notified: (yes) _____ (no) _____ Time: _____

Signature of person reporting: _____

Signature of parent: _____

Incident Report

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Time: _____ Where did the incident happen: _____

Describe the incident, including the names of witnesses:

What first aid was given:

By whom: _____

Parent or Guardian notified: (yes) _____ (no) _____ Time: _____

Signature of person reporting: _____

Signature of parent: _____

GUIDELINES for DEALING with ALLEGED ABUSIVE PARENT / GUARDIAN

When a child discloses information regarding their safety at home:

1) Ask clarifying questions such as what is occurring, whether the child is being harmed and by whom, how often it is occurring, and how safe do they feel in going home. Using grace and tact when asking these questions is important for the comfort of the child involved. Try not to show emotions such as shock or urgency but do show empathy and understanding. Remember, we are seeking basic information and the authorities will seek further detailed information.

2) Per the Rock Island Police Department:

a) Contact the Police Department. This can be accomplished by calling the non-emergency number at (309) 732-2677 which will reach the front desk clerk or contact 911 directly if necessary. Relay as much information as you can to the desk clerk or the dispatcher and they will dispatch an Officer to the church who will then begin their initial investigation. The Police Officer will then determine if they need to take protective custody of the child and they will contact the Department of Children and Family Services.

b) If the parent arrives before the Police Officers, try to have someone stay with the child and parent while waiting for the police to arrive. If you are able to separate them while waiting, this would be preferred.* If not, try to stay close so nothing can happen while waiting for the Officers to arrive.

c) If the parent wants to leave with the child prior to the Officers' arrival, try to delay.* Avoid a confrontation with them unless you feel the child is in imminent danger of being harmed.

d) If the parent leaves with the child, try to obtain the vehicle description as well as a license plate number. Relay this information to the Officers or dispatchers on the phone.

3) Complete an Incident Report and provide to the office as soon as possible on the day of the incident..

* Ideas for delay pending Police Officers' arrival / separation of child from parent:

- Ask the child to help you with something in another room: cleaning up, finishing a craft, etc.
- Have the child go to the restroom until retrieved by a ministry person or Police Officer.
- Suddenly remember that it is 'John's' birthday and you have a card for the child to sign in another room.