

Child Protection Policy and Procedures
Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church
November 19, 2013

I. Introduction:

As Christians, we believe that God creates us to live in community with one another. We understand that life in the church is to be lived according to the rule of love. Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Matt 22:37-39

As members of Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church (CSPC) we are a community that desires, in response to God's love, to love him in return, to love others, and to serve the world. We seek the welfare of our members and visitors. Therefore, we are committed to the protection of all children and other persons participating in the activities and programs of CSPC. Abuse, exploitation or harassment in any form, physical, emotional or sexual, will not be tolerated.

As part of our congregation's baptismal vows, we covenant with each other to take responsibility for the nurture of faith. As such, the members of this church have pledged to uphold one another. In the spirit of Christ we teach, strengthen and support the individual's relationship within the Church family.

As part of our congregation's membership vows we promise to promote the unity, purity and peace of the Church. CSPC is committed to the sanctity of all children. A well-implemented child protection policy is intended to not only protect children from abuse in church-sponsored events, but also to protect adults who minister to minors.

This policy applies to all teachers, staff, volunteers and paid workers who work in church programs which involve children. This policy does not constitute a contract between the church and its workers or the church and any other party. It is merely a statement of policy and general guideline, which Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church will seek to follow. Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church makes no guarantees to any party that all aspects of this policy will be followed in any given situation. Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church is not responsible for the individual acts of any worker.

II. Definitions:

- A. CSPC refers to Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church
- B. Child abuse is the deliberate and intentional wrongful treatment of a child, which presents an imminent risk of serious harm to the child. Identifying the signs of abuse is the first step in helping an abused or neglected child. Common symptoms include malnutrition, poor hygiene, extremes in behavior, age-inappropriate knowledge of sex and unexplained bruises, burns or welts. More specifically, there are four types of child abuse:
 1. Neglect: Occurs when a parent or caretaker allows a child to experience avoidable suffering or fails to provide basic essentials for physical, social, and educational development.
 2. Physical Abuse: Occurs when a child suffers a non-accidental injury that may include severe beatings, burns, fractures, bruises, welts, or other physical problems.

Indicators of Physical Abuse:

- Unexplained bruises or burns
- Repeated injuries or injuries inconsistent with explanation
- Excessive fear of parent or caregiver
- Unusual shyness

3. Sexual Abuse: Occurs when an adult or older child exploits a child for sexual gratification. Sexual abuse includes molestation, fondling, sodomy, child prostitution, incest, and forcing or encouraging a child to participate in sexual and/or pornographic activity.

Indicators of Sexual Abuse

- Pain and irritation of the genitals
- Torn, stained or bloody underwear
- Genital discharge
- Sudden changes in behavior
- In young children, preoccupation with genitals

4. Emotional Abuse: Occurs when a parent or caretaker creates a negative environment for a child through exposure to spoken or unspoken violence or threats.

Potential Indicators of Emotional Abuse

- Speech disorders or eating disorders
- Flat spot or bald spot on infants head
- Poor relations with peers
- Habit disorders such as biting, rocking, head banging

- C. Child generally means a person who is younger than age 18 and who is not an emancipated minor.
- D. Suspicion is defined as a reason to believe based on some event or circumstance. Personal disclosure is defined as the act or instance of making known one's own experience.
- E. Regular teachers and workers for this policy shall be both paid and volunteer workers who serve in a CSPC ministry to children or during any overnight function. They agree in their service to the church to submit to the leadership and government of the church.
- F. Occasional workers are those who work in the presence of regular workers and serve in an area of ministry less than 24 hours per year.

III. Policy and Procedure.

- A. CSPC is subject to Tennessee state laws and Federal laws regarding the protection of children. As such, we are mandated to provide instruction in the "detection, intervention, prevention, treatment and reporting of child sexual abuse."
- B. CSPC will seek to prevent the abuse of children when those children are participating in church programs. Preventive measures include screening, training and supervision of all regular and occasional teachers and workers as well as physical protections, such as requiring id badges for entry into the children's areas.
- C. All workers, teachers and staff who will be involved in the custody or supervision of children must have been participants in CSPC church activities for at least six months, which will be determined from their written applications.
- D. The director of any program involving children at CSPC must approve any person or persons who would act in a supervisory capacity over children in said program. Those persons must meet all other criteria required by this policy before consideration for any supervisory position.
- E. Reference Questionnaire and Checks. All teachers and workers with minor children will be asked to complete a confidential written application which will include questions regarding child abuse. Volunteers will also complete

the Volunteer Code of Conduct form. Volunteer Junior Helpers will complete the Volunteer Application for Junior Helpers. The application will be submitted to the CSPC staff person responsible for the program. This staff person will check references, keep written records and follow up as appropriate. Applicant's files will remain in the Accounting Specialist-Payroll/Benefits files for the lawful retention period.

- F. Background Checks. All CSPC employees and all regular workers and teachers who work with minors **must** complete an authorization form for Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church to conduct a national criminal database search, national sex offender registry search and SSN verification and address history trace. County criminal searches may also be conducted. The background checks will be renewed every 3 years for all CSPC employees and all workers and volunteers who work with minors. The search results shall remain confidential and on file in the Accounting Specialist-Payroll/Benefits files for a minimum of three years.
- G. Training. All teachers and workers will be given a written copy of this policy. They will be asked to read this policy when applying for service and review the policy again annually while continuing to serve. Child protection instruction will be offered at least annually at normal training sessions for regular teachers, workers and volunteers. This training will cover the nature and evidences of child abuse and review the CSPC child protection policy. The instruction will also cover the detection, intervention, prevention, treatment and reporting of child sexual abuse
- H. Supervision
 - 1. For On-site Activities:
 - a. Whenever possible, activities with children will include at least two non-related adult staff workers, one of whom is a regular teacher or worker.
 - b. Restroom use: Preschool age children shall be accompanied to the restroom by an adult who shall wait outside the door for the child. The child's teacher shall be informed of their destination at the time of exiting & returning to the classroom. Elementary school age children attending the Weekday School must choose a same sex "buddy" to accompany them to the restroom. The child's teacher shall be informed of their destination at the time of exiting & returning to the classroom.
 - 2. For Off-site Activities when children, teachers and workers are participating in a CSPC sponsored event:
 - a. Whenever possible, activities away from church property will require a signed permission statement from parents or guardians of the children participating.
 - b. Overnights: Males and Females shall be segregated during sleeping time. If it is deemed necessary for adults to share sleeping accommodations with the children, two adults the same gender as the children being chaperoned shall sleep in each area.
 - c. All volunteer and staff persons who drive and/or chaperone off-site trips involving children shall be in conformance with all aspects of the Child Protection Policy, e.g. on off- campus trips, 2 adults must be in the vehicle when children/youth are present.
 - 3. Parents and legal custodians/guardians are welcome to observe any activity with their children.
 - 4. CSPC workers will be instructed not to search children.
 - 5. CSPC workers will be instructed not to practice corporal punishment.
 - 6. Workers will be instructed not to use physical force except in self-defense. Workers will normally work in teams in all discipline problems. Supervisors will be encouraged to be present and otherwise involved in discipline problems.

I. Reporting:

Tennessee law requires anyone with direct knowledge or reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been a victim of child abuse or neglect to report it to the Department of Children's Services or law enforcement. Therefore, all known or reasonably suspected incidents of child abuse on church property or at church activities are to be reported to the supervisor responsible for the program, the Business Manager and the Tennessee Department of Children's Services (DCS).

1. Suspicion of Child Abuse and Neglect

Any suspicion of child abuse or neglect should be immediately brought to the attention of the employee or volunteer in charge of the event (supervisor), the Children's or Student Ministry Director or Weekday School Director, the Church Business Manager and DCS. The call to DCS, if practicable, should be made in the presence of the Supervisor. Reporting an incident to the supervisor does not relieve a person of the duty and responsibility to report to the DCS. Failure to report is a Class A Misdemeanor under Tennessee Code Section 37-1-401 et. seq. Any further discussion of the activity in question is a breach of confidentiality. The person receiving the report of suspicion of inappropriate activity shall then document the date, time and circumstances of the alleged incident on the attached CSPC Alleged Abuse Incident Report Form.

2. Personal Disclosure of Child Abuse and Neglect

The person receiving the personal disclosure shall immediately report to Children's Director, Weekday School Director, or Student Ministry Director (supervisor), the Church Business Manager and DCS. The call to DCS, if practicable, should be made in the presence of the supervisor. Reporting an incident to the supervisor does not relieve a person of the duty and responsibility to report to the DCS. Failure to report is a Class A misdemeanor under Tennessee Code Section 37-1-401 et. seq. The person receiving the report of suspicion of inappropriate activity shall then document the date, time and circumstances of the alleged incident on the attached CSPC Alleged Abuse Incident Report Form.

J. Responding and the Role of the Responding Committee

1. The person receiving the initial report of suspicion will report immediately to the Church Business Manager who will take immediate administrative action by informing the church legal counsel and, if applicable, the church insurer. If the allegation involves an employee, the chair of the Personnel Management Team shall also be notified. If necessary, a Responding Committee may be formed. The committee may incorporate additional persons to assist in responding to the situation as necessary. Those individuals may include; 1) Clerk of Session, 2) one other member of Session appointed by the Senior Pastor, Business Manager or the Clerk of Session, 3) legal counsel, 4) a representative from the Knox County Children's Advocacy Center, 5) others as deemed appropriate by the Responding Committee (i.e. additional pastoral counseling or mental health officials).

The Responding Committee must comply with all state laws and shall avoid compromising, interfering with or delaying a legal investigation as part of any review of the allegations.

All allegations shall be regarded as serious, and due consideration shall be given to the rights and privacy of both the alleged victim and the person being accused.

The accused individual, whether staff or volunteer, will be required to refrain from participating in all child activities until it is determined if further action shall be taken. Care shall be taken to respond to all allegations in a professional manner.

2. If appropriate under the law, under the strict guidance of the church's legal counsel and insurance carrier, the *Responding Committee* may also;
 - a. Assign a person to the *Responding Committee* for each of the accused individuals and the alleged victim as a contact and for support.
 - b. Contact the alleged victim's parents, if it will not put the child in jeopardy.
 - c. Maintain documents of all efforts to handle the situation.
 - d. After the committee has fulfilled its legal reporting requirements, a committee member shall be assigned to be the spokesperson. This person will be the sole individual communicating to outside authorities or other persons (including the Session, the congregation and the media) regarding the incident.

IV. The following addenda are part of this policy:

- A. How to Report Abuse or Neglect
- B. CSPC Alleged Abuse Incident Report Form
- C. CSPC Screening Policy for Ministry to Minors
- D. CSPC Volunteers' Code Of Conduct
- E. Security Form for Ministry to Minors
- F. Record of CSPC Contact with a Reference or Church Identified by an Applicant for Ministry to Minors
- G. Reference Questionnaire
- H. Background Check Authorization
- I. Volunteer Application for Junior Helpers

How to Report Abuse or Neglect

24 Hour Child Abuse Reporting Directory

Central Intake 1-877-237-0004

The Referral Process:

When a person notifies the Department of Children's Services regarding possible abuse or neglect of a child, Children's Services case managers determine how quickly to proceed with an investigation by assessing the referral information and focusing on the present and future risks to the child. Considering the condition of the child and the risk of future maltreatment helps a case manager know how to quickly to respond to a CPS referral and what priority to assign that referral. This process involves accepting oral or written allegations of child abuse or neglect for further investigation, gathering the information to determine the need for CPS and the urgency of the situation and initiating the appropriate response and an investigative plan.

Children's Services accepts reports of child maltreatment provided it meets the following three criteria:

- The report pertains to a child under the age of 18 years.
- The report alleges harm or imminent risk of harm to the child.
- The alleged perpetrator is:
 - a parent or caretaker
 - a relative or other person living in the home
 - an educator, volunteer, or employee of a recreational/organizational setting who is responsible for the child; or any individual providing treatment, care or supervision for the child.

The Department of Children's Services accepts all referral involving sexual abuse of children under the age of 13 years regardless of the previous relationship between the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator. Children's Services does not investigate sexual abuse allegations of a child 13 to 18 years old by an alleged perpetrator who does not have a relationship with the child, as defined above unless the child is in the Department's custody. Children's Services may assist law enforcement or the district attorney's office in such cases.

Information needed when reporting:

- Nature of the harm or specific incident(s) that precipitated the report
 - Specific allegation(s), date(s) and descriptions(s) of the injuries or dangers
 - Identities of alleged perpetrator(s) and their relationships to the victim
 - Witnesses to the incident(s) and how to reach those witnesses
 - Details of any physical evidence available
 - Perpetrator's current access to the child
 - Present condition of the child (alone, in need of medical attention, etc.)
 - The location of the child and directions to get there
 - Any statements from the child
- Parent's or perpetrator's explanation of the alleged child victim's condition or the incident
- Parent's current emotional, physical or mental state, especially feelings about the child(ren) and reactions to the report
- How the reporter came to know the information and the reporter's thoughts about the likelihood of further harm to the child(ren).

These are just several examples of the questions that may be asked when reporting abuse or neglect. The reporter's identity is confidential, but a name should be given so the Department could follow-up contact with the reporter if necessary. The reporter is free from civil or criminal liability for reports of suspected child abuse or neglect made in good faith.

CSPC ALLEGED ABUSE INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Today's Date: _____ Name of Preparer (print): _____

Please check which is being reported: Allegation Known incident Other: _____

Date of incident: _____ Place of incident: _____

Date and time incident was first reported: ____/____/____ ____:____ AM PM

Incident reported to CSPC Staff member (name & title): _____

Who made you aware of the incident: _____

Name(s) of minors involved: _____

Please describe the incident as you saw it or as it was reported: _____

Did anyone else witness the incident (list names)? _____

Describe any visible physical injuries observed: _____

If injuries were treated, describe treatment and by whom: _____

Name of person accused of incident: _____

Relationship of accused to victim (paid staff, volunteer, family member, other): _____

Was anything said by the victim, witnesses, or accused (describe): _____

Were parent(s)/guardian(s) notified? ____ When? _____ By whom? _____

Summary of conversation: _____

Was the incident reported to authorities? No Yes - who was contacted (list details): _____

Was the church insurance company notified? No Yes, by _____

Was the church attorney notified? No Yes, by _____

What other aspects of the incident need to be shared: _____

Signature of Preparer: _____

CSPC SCREENING POLICY
FOR MINISTRY TO MINORS

POLICY:

All persons working with minors are to be screened prior to service at Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church by utilization of the prescribed procedures established by the Child Protection Team and Personnel Management Team in the CSPC Child Protection Policy.

This policy and process does not constitute a contract either between CSPC and the worker or between CSPC and the parents or guardians of children engaging in CSPC activities. CSPC is not responsible for the individual acts of any worker.

Approved by the Personnel Management Team 2012

CSPC VOLUNTEERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

Our children are the most important gifts God has entrusted to us. As a volunteer I promise to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in this Code of Conduct as a condition of my providing services to the children and youth of our church.

As a volunteer, I will:

- Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity and consideration.
- Avoid situations where I am alone with minors.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition or comparison when working with minors.
- Refuse to accept expensive gifts from minors or their parents, without prior written approval from the parents or guardians and the ministry director or business manager.
- Refrain from giving expensive gifts to minors without prior written approval from the parents or guardian and the ministry director or business manager.
- Report suspected abuse to the ministry director, business manager, or appropriate supervisor and the local responsible agency (DHS or police). I understand that failure to report suspected abuse to civil authorities is, according to the law, a misdemeanor.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of minors.

As a volunteer, I will not:

- Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of minors while volunteering.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while volunteering.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of any illegal drugs at any time.
- Pose any health risk to children and/or youth.
- Strike, spank, shake, or slap any minor.
- Humiliate, ridicule, threaten or degrade any child or youth.
- Touch a minor in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Use any discipline that frightens or humiliates children and/or youth.
- Use any profanity in the presence of minors.
- Inappropriately contact minors through technology/social media.

I understand that as a volunteer working with children and/or youth I am subject to a thorough background check including criminal history. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in my removal as a volunteer with children and/or youth.

Printed name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____



Security Form for Ministry to Minors

Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church



This security form is to be completed by all workers for any position involving the supervision or custody of minors in church programs. Return to the _____ Department.

Date: _____ Phone (home): _____ (work): _____

E-mail: _____ Mobile Phone: _____

Name: _____ Gender: _____

Complete Address: _____

Occupation: _____ Best time to reach by phone: _____

How long have you participated in CSPC activities? _____ Member: Yes No

If no, what church are you a member of? _____

What other church(es) have you regularly attended over the past five years? _____

Other activities or work at CSPC or with other Christian organizations including any involving children:

Have you read the CSPC Child Protection Policy? Yes No

Have you ever been convicted or pleaded guilty to child abuse or a crime involving actual or attempted

sexual molestation of a minor? Yes No If yes, please explain: _____

List any gifts, callings, training, or education that has prepared you for working with children: _____

Do you have any physical or mental handicaps or conditions preventing you from certain activities related to children's work? Yes No

If yes, please explain: _____

Personal References
(not former employers or relatives)

Reference #1:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Reference #2:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Office Use Only:

Reference #1 contacted by _____ Date of Contact: _____

Reference #2 contacted by _____ Date of Contact: _____

Statement

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references or church listed in this application to give you any information they may have regarding my character and fitness for children work. I release all such references from liability for any damage that may result from furnishing such evaluations to you, and I waive any right that I may have to inspect references provided on my behalf.

Should I be accepted, I agree to be bound by the policies of Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church, and to refrain from unscriptural conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of the church. I acknowledge that these policies and forms do not constitute a contract between the church and myself, and that CSPC is not responsible for the individual acts of any worker.

Signature _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Date _____

Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church

Children's Ministry Reference Questionnaire

_____ Department

Your name was given as a reference by _____ who has applied or volunteered for the position of _____ in our church. All workers with minors must have on file a record of reference contacts. Please complete the questionnaire and return it as soon as possible in the enclosed envelope. The above person ___ has ___ has not waived the right to review comments of references. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

1. How long have you known the above person? _____ In what capacity? (your relationship)

2. How do you feel about his/her emotional and physical ability to handle the responsibilities involved in providing childcare? _____

3. Have you observed him/her with children? _____ If so, in what situations and what particular skills? _____

4. Do you have any concerns about his/her ability to provide childcare? _____

If so, please explain. _____

5. Do you know of any conditions making him/her unsuitable for working with children? _____

If so, please describe. _____

6. Additional comments (use back if necessary) _____

Signature

Daytime phone number

Date

Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church Background Check Authorization

In connection with my application for employment or to serve as a volunteer with Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church ("Client"), I understand that a "consumer report" and/or "investigative consumer report", as defined by the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. § 1681), will be requested by Client for employment or volunteer purposes, whichever is applicable, from Protect My Ministry, Inc., ("Protect My Ministry"), a consumer reporting agency as defined by the Fair Credit Reporting Act. These reports may include information as to my character, general reputation, personal characteristics or mode of living, whichever are applicable. They may involve interviews with sources such as my neighbors, friends or associates. The report may also contain information about me relating to my criminal history, credit history, driving and/or motor vehicle records, social security number verification, verification of education or employment history, worker's compensation (only after a conditional job offer) or other background checks. Such reports may be obtained at any time after receipt of this Disclosure and Authorization and if I am hired or serve as a volunteer, whichever is applicable, throughout the course of my employment or volunteer service, as permitted by law and unless revoked by me in writing. Client also reserves the right to share my report with any third-party with whom I will be placed to work or volunteer with as a representative of Client. I understand that I have the right, upon written request made within a reasonable amount of time after the receipt of this notice, to request disclosure of the nature and scope of any investigative consumer report to Protect My Ministry, Inc., 14499 N. Dale Mabry Hwy., Suite 201 South, Tampa, FL 33618 or 1-800-319-5581. For information about Protect My Ministry's privacy practices, see www.protectmyministry.com.

Last Name _____ First Name _____ Middle Initial _____

Please List Other Names Used _____

Home Address _____

City _____ County _____ State _____ Zip _____

SSN _____ D/L or State ID _____ State Issued _____

Email Address _____ Phone number _____

For identification purposes only, please provide FULL Date of Birth: _____

Will you be an ___Employee or ___Volunteer? Which Ministry? _____

Have you ever participated in, been accused or convicted of, or plead guilty or no contest to any type of abuse or sexual misconduct? ___Yes ___No

Have you read the CSPC Child Protection Policy? ___Yes ___No

Acknowledgement and Authorization

By signing below, I authorize Client or its authorized agents to obtain or prepare consumer reports or investigative consumer reports about me. I acknowledge receipt of a copy of the federal notice entitled *A Summary of Your Rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act* and certify that I have read this Disclosure and Authorization as well as the summary document explaining my rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

Signature: _____ Today's Date _____

Volunteer Application for Junior Helpers

Ministry area interested in serving:

Nursery (1-2 yrs) Kingdom Kids (3-Pre-K) Grades K-5

Today's Date _____ 1st Hour _____ 2nd Hour _____

Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____ Grade in School _____

City _____ Zip _____

Home Phone (____) _____ Cell Phone (____) _____

Email Address _____

How long have you attended Cedar Springs Church? _____

Have you read the CSPC Child Protection Policy? Yes No

List activities or work at Cedar Springs or with other organizations including any involving children:

List any qualities, training, or education that have prepared you for working with children:

X _____ **X** _____

Applicant Signature

Parent Signature

Personal References

Please list 2 adults (Not family members) who know you well, and whom the church may contact.

Reference #1

Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone: _____

Reference #2

Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone: _____

Statement

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references or church listed in this application to give you any information they may have regarding my character and fitness for children work. I release all such references from liability for any damage that may result from furnishing such evaluations to you, and I waive any right that I may have to inspect references provided on my behalf.

Should I be accepted, I agree to be bound by the policies of Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church, and to refrain from unscriptural conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of the church. I acknowledge that these policies and forms do not constitute a contract between the church and myself, and that CSPC is not responsible for the individual acts of any worker.

Signature _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Date _____