

A POLICY STATEMENT FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Bethel United Methodist Church is a spiritual community which takes seriously its responsibility to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children, youth and vulnerable adults who participate in our ministries. All volunteers and employees who assist in these ministries are living out the vows we take in baptism to nurture our children and youth in the Christian faith. Every church worker plays a role in fostering the spiritual development of individuals and families in our church community.

The disturbing and traumatic rise of physical and sexual abuse of children has claimed the attention of our nation and society. The following statements reflect the commitment of Bethel United Methodist Church to provide a safe environment for all children, youth vulnerable adults, and church workers who participate in church sponsored ministries.

In an effort to provide a safe community, this church requires all church workers to commit themselves to the Policy Statement For the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults adopted by the Administrative Council of this church. In doing so, church workers will be asked to provide personal information, review the church policy and understand that they will be under the supervision of their respective leaders.

This policy is made up of seven parts:

- I. Recruiting and Selecting Church Workers
- II. Supervising Church Workers
- III. Reporting Procedures
- IV. Responding To Allegations of Abuse
- V. Care of Documents
- VI. Definition of Terms
- VII. Additional Information

I. RECRUITING AND SELECTING CHURCH WORKERS

Principles:

- All workers – both paid and volunteer – require screening.
- All employees will complete the Employee Information Form.
- Volunteers will complete the Volunteer Information Form (A).
- All parents will complete the Information Form (B).
- All church workers will be interviewed.
- References and agencies listed will be contacted. (Documentation will be kept).
- Members and constituents will only be allowed to work with children and youth after they have attended the church for a period of at least six months.
- Anyone who has been convicted of, or plead guilty to, either child sexual or physical abuse, will not work with children, youth, or vulnerable adults.

- All church workers will agree to follow the policies.

Steps in Recruiting and Selecting Church Workers:

1. A basic information form will be used to register children and youth. (Information Form B)
2. All church members, employees and constituents will be made aware of the Policy Statement for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults.
3. All church workers will be required to fill out the appropriate information form.
4. Statements in the information forms will be reviewed by (list leaders who will review the form).
 - Employed Staff = PPRC
 - Volunteers = appropriate chairperson, superintendent, director
5. References will be contacted and noted on the forms.
6. A check for arrest and conviction records will be made for all employees.
7. The church will seek to provide open lines of communication with parents and an open-door policy allowing parents access to programs at any time.
8. Church workers will attend an orientation and/or training session on abuse prevention.

II. SUPERVISING CHURCH WORKERS

Principles:

- There are specific procedures for on-site and off-site situations.
- Specific, parental permission is required for off-site meetings.
- Specific, written, parental permission is required for adults to go out alone with a child or youth.
- Suspicious behavior will be discussed immediately.
- The church will provide personnel based on the ratios listed below.
- There will be a specific Nursery Identification Procedure.

Staffing Ratios

There is a 2-adult rule. So just because it says 1 adult care giver does not mean you can only have 1 adult care giver. These ratios come from the American Academy of Pediatrics. Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts have stricter ratios. If there is a group of children with mixed ages, always use the ratios for the youngest child.

Staff-to-child ratio and group size*

Birth to 12 months 3 with groups <6

13-30 months 1:4 with groups <8

31-35 months 1:5 with groups <10

3 yr olds 1:7 with groups <14

4 and 5 yr olds 1:8 with groups <16

6-10 yr olds 1:9 with groups < 16

10-12yr olds 1:10 with groups < 16

13-18 yr olds 1: 12 with groups <20

*The two-adult rule only applies in the absence of functioning monitoring cameras.

Other important information from the American Academy of Pediatrics

Infection Control: Hand-washing with soap and running water after diapering, before handling food, and when contaminated by body fluids

Children wash hands after toileting and before eating

Routinely cleaned facilities, toys, equipment

Up-to-date immunizations of staff and children

Emergency procedures. Written policies. All staff and children familiar with procedures Up-to-date parent contact lists

Injury prevention. Play equipment safe, including proper shock-absorbing materials under climbing toys Universal Back-to-Sleep practices

Developmentally appropriate toys and equipment Toxins out of reach

More information on staffing ratios and safety in childcare settings can be found at: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/115/1/187.full.pdf>

Nursery Guidelines and Considerations

Age group definitions in Michigan (Michigan Department of Health and Human Services)

Baby (infant) — age 1 day to 12 months (1 year)

Pre-Toddler — age 12 months to 24 months

Toddler 2-3 years

Pre-school — 3 to 5 years

There are different requirements for children in these age groupings. Toys that are designed for preschoolers cannot be shared with toddlers or babies. Areas where children of these age groupings can safely play and be cared for must be distinguished. However, there may be one toileting area, hand/toy washing area for all of these age groupings.

Also consider, square foot requirements. The State has minimum square footage requirements based on age groupings.

The State also has minimum child care worker requirements for numbers of children by age grouping.

The State of Michigan requires that when there is a mixed age group of children under age 5, you must use the requirements for the youngest age child in the area.

Sanitizing: Every surface and every toy must be sanitized in the church nursery. Every time a child places a toy near or in their mouth, it must go into a bucket to be sanitized. Every time a child spits up, sneezes on, gets any bodily fluid on a surface of any kind, it must be sanitized. A schedule for cleaning nurseries should be created and it should be recorded, and kept in the nursery. An established plan for continuous sanitizing of toys and items that come in contact with bodily fluids must be in place. Parents may ask for this information. Not only can this become a legal liability for church but also parents will not leave children in a nursery where toys are not clean and arranged by age grouping.

Discipline: A church nursery is a special place. It should be attractive and warm. Hopefully, children will want to come to the church nursery. Children can all learn that God loves them, and that Jesus teaches them to love and care for one another. Discipline policies must be established. It is never okay to hit a child. When a child is doing something they should not be doing, distract them, take the toy away, pick them up and move them. Do something to keep all the children safe and happy. Yes, you will have crying and tears in church nurseries. Plan an activity or song to deal with specific situations.

Other rules set up by your nursery staff and parents:

Every space needs to have its own rules and policies. For example, some nurseries require all shoes removed before you enter the nursery so as not to track the salt used to melt the ice outside into the nursery as it is poisonous. Some nurseries require parents to bring their own diaper wipes and diapers/pull-ups while some nurseries provide everything needed. If a child will be in the nursery longer than 1 hour, refrigeration of formula and baby bottles is required. Some nurseries have small fridges and others need to make policies on storing and retrieving refrigerated items. It is always good to have a small freezer to keep ice for injuries. First aid policies must be established by each nursery.

Caring for young children and babies in the Church Nursery

There are Federal, State, County, Local and Insurance carrier requirements regarding care of babies, toddlers, and preschool age children. Ignorance of these rules and regulations makes your church nursery both unsafe for children of all ages and at risk for legal liability.

These rules and regulations may be different if the person(s) caring for the children is being paid (compensation) either as an employee or by the parents directly. Typically, the requirements are stricter if the care giver is being paid.

The only persons permitted in the nursery are the parents as they drop off or pick up children and the care givers who have been authorized. A parent may stay or come and go, but may care for their child only. Siblings are not permitted to stay in the nursery because a sibling could unintentionally hurt a child.

Requirements:

1. Sign in and sign out procedure — if someone other than the parent who dropped off the child will pick them up, this must be written on the sign-in and out form. At no time, can a big sister or brother pick up a child from the nursery.
2. Child registration form or information form to be completed by parent or guardian before parent leaves child — must include: allergies, needed medical info, diapering/toilet info, feeding info, parent labeling child's belongings such as pacifier, blanket, stuffed animal, etc. There must be a place for parents to give individual instructions.
3. No sick children can be left in the nursery — Some nurseries take temperatures, require doctor's notes after an illness, and more. You must establish nursery policies regarding skin rashes, runny noses, coughs, allergies, etc.
4. All items left in nursery that belong to a child must be labeled with child's name — Placing the child's name on their back with masking tape is also a good idea. Especially if you have several children around the same age.
5. Method of contacting parent must be established — Some churches have paging systems, others use the vibrate mode on cell phones. But some system must be in place. If parent will be more than a few minutes away, consider that the registration/information form may need to have a signed statement of release allowing you to contact medical emergency help.
6. Use of universal precautions and sanitizing procedures — you must protect the child care worker (gloves for changing diapers and touching bodily fluids) and you must protect the children through sanitizing the room, toys, and all surfaces.
7. Cribs — The federal government deadline of December 28, 2012 has passed. Your cribs must be in compliance with federal safety standards. You cannot even donate or give away non-compliant cribs. They must be destroyed. You cannot even place a screw in the side bars of old cribs to lock them in place. Cribs must pass new strength tests and be manufactured after June 28, 2011. Suggestion: if babies will be in the nursery for short periods, less than 2 hours, they can sleep

in their car seats. Day care laws require that infants and toddlers be able to lie down in a crib if they will be in the day care facility for more than 2 to 3 hours, but this is different state to state and county to county so check it out. Typically, church nurseries are not day care facilities, so you do not have to comply with day care laws.

Toy safety — Toys are made for certain age groups of children and are safe for that age group. Recalls are constantly being placed on toys. You must keep informed about recalls, ignorance does not protect the child or you from liability. Your church can be sued if a crawling baby chokes on a toy that is small, and designed for children at least 4 years old.

Accidents: They will happen with young children. When you are learning to walk, you fall down. Use ice to treat most injuries but have band-aids and other emergency necessities available. Record all injuries on paper and tell parents about every injury, and the treatment you provided for that injury. Include how it happened, how the child reacted, what you did about it, and after the parent leaves, record how the parent reacted to your report of the fall or injury. This documentation should be given to the director of the church event.

Recommended Resources:

See:

http://www.faithformationlearningexchange.net/uploads/5/2/4/6/5246709/creating_a_high_quality_church_nursery.pdf

http://www.flumc.org/imp/pdf/the_church_nursery.pdf

<https://www.churchpublishing.org/media/customANFormation/TheChurchNursery.pdf>

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/child-care-and-the-church>

http://www.awfumc.org/files/old_files_library/CUMCNursery_Guidelines.pdf

<http://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154->

[63294_5529_49572_50051---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/lara/0,4601,7-154-63294_5529_49572_50051---,00.html)

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/dhs/Child_Care_Center

[Rules_4190957.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/dhs/Child_Care_Center_Rules_4190957.pdf)

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/pdf/hygiene/diapering-procedures-childcare-508c.pdf>

Social Networks and Cyberbullying

With the coming of Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, Snapchat and many, more social media outlets, we have put ourselves and children at risk. There are security measures in place to help keep you safe, but bullying on the internet has become common. When someone posts to your wall an ugly or nasty comment, and then others join in and do the same, this is an example of cyberbullying.

Steps to prevent Cyberbullying:

1. Be a good "Internet Citizen" - Respect the rights and feelings of others in cyberspace by being polite and displaying good manners online.
 - a) Don't attack others online.
 - b) Don't forward other people's emails without their permission to share their personal information.
 - c) Don't forward emails or messages that are mean or that spread rumors.
2. Think before you send - whatever you send can be made public very quickly and could stay online forever.
 - a) Don't post or send information that others could use against you.
 - b) Don't send out messages when you are angry.
3. Keep your personal information to yourself.
 - a) Do not type your name, address, or phone number online.
 - b) Do not share passwords with friends - EVER.
 - c) Only give your cell number or personal website address to trusted friends.
4. Keep photos off the internet.
 - a) Post photos rarely - Only post head shots of yourself. This lessens the chance of photos being changed.
 - b) Do not send a picture of yourself to anyone.
5. Practice good internet safety.
 - a) Change passwords frequently.
 - b) Only respond to emails or instant messages from people you know (or from addresses you know).
 - c) If something inappropriate appears, turn off the screen and tell an adult.
6. Friends don't hide who they are.
 - a) Only "friend" people you actually know. Do not "friend" individuals simply to have more "friends" than others.
 - b) Be wary of the people you meet online because many people hide their true identities by lying about their age, gender, and intentions.
7. Open and in "light of day" with regard to cyberspace.

- a) Don't write anything to a youth that you would not want their parents to see.
- b) Don't write personal information.
- c) Consider sending a copy of the email to the parent or another adult.
Remember that what you write or text is there forever, including pictures.

What To Do If You Have Been Attacked

1. Ignore - repeated or persistent unknown messages and requests for chats.
 - a) Don't open emails or messages from someone you know is gossiping or saying mean things about others.
2. Block — Learn how to block or report someone who is behaving badly or who is bullying.
3. Save the evidence — learn how to keep records of offending messages and pictures.
 - a) Show the message to an adult you trust, like a parent or teacher.
4. Keep asking — if the first adult you tell doesn't help, you should keep telling until someone does.
5. Don't meet — Never arrange to meet someone who is bullying you online.
6. Don't retaliate or reply!

If the cyber bully is still bothering you even after you have tried the previous things, you should do the following:

- Report the cyber bully to the local police.

For more information on cyberbullying and internet safety you may visit the following sites: www.cyberbullying.org
www.stopbullying.gov
www.nobullying.com
www.endcyberbullying.net

III. REPORTING PROCEDURES

Principles:

- The church recognizes a legal obligation and will comply with all state and federal laws.
- The church recognizes its obligation for mutual accountability. (see definition below)
- The church recognizes each person's moral obligation for personal responsibility.
- The established line of reporting shall be followed in all incidents of suspicious activity, observed abused and allegations by a victim.

- The United Methodist Discipline and any Annual Conference policies that pertain to reporting procedures shall be followed.
- The advice of legal counsel and the insurance company are to be obtained, as necessary.

Notes (the following items are important):

- Take all allegations seriously. Be gentle and protective of both victim and alleged abuser.
- Document as stated above. Anonymous allegations should be reported to counsel.
- Persons who are the object of the report will refrain from all children and youth activities until it is determined if further action shall be taken. In any removal of an alleged party from any activities, care should be taken to handle this in a discrete manner, recognizing that an investigation is still being conducted.

IV. Policy For Reporting Suspected Abuse, Bullying Or Neglect Involving Children, Youth or Vulnerable Adults

A) A. Persons Required to Report

1. All Care Providers and church employees who have reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult in compliance with state law shall report all known and suspected cases of abuse or neglect which (a) occur on the church premises; (b) occur at a church-related function, activity or event, or; (c) are disclosed during a church-related function, activity or event. All other persons may report known and suspected cases of abuse or neglect in accordance with this Policy and the laws of the State of Michigan. This Policy supports mandatory reporting in compliance with the State of Michigan_
2. If any child, youth, or vulnerable adult arrives at a church-related event with signs of abuse or neglect, the event director shall immediately implement this Policy's reporting procedures in compliance with state law.
3. The reporting requirements in this Policy are the minimum requirements. This Policy does not preclude anyone from reporting a known or suspected case of abuse or neglect to others for the protection of children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Unless such protection requires otherwise, however, confidentiality of the information reported or received shall be respected to protect the rights and interest of the victim, the alleged perpetrator and their families.
4. Under Michigan law, anyone reporting in good faith a known or suspected case of abuse or neglect, to Children's Protective Services or Adult Protective Services is immune from civil or criminal liability which might otherwise be incurred thereby.

B) Required Reporting Process

1. The Care Provider shall immediately report the known or suspected abuse or neglect to the event director.

2. For the protection of all parties, if the suspected or alleged perpetrator is in/on the premises, he or she is to be isolated from the program and have no contact with the children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
3. As soon as possible and in all cases within 24 hours, the care giver who observed or received the disclosure shall telephone an oral report to Children's Protective Services or Adult Protective Services to the Centralized Intake TOLL FREE number for the State of Michigan (855-444-3911). This oral report shall be made in conjunction with the person who made the observations or received the disclosure. The following information is typically required in the oral report:
 1. Name, age and gender of the alleged victim and other family members
 2. Address, phone number and/or direction to the alleged victim's home
 3. Parent's place(s) of employment (if known)
 4. Name and address of alleged perpetrator
 5. Description of the suspected abuse
 6. Current condition of the alleged victim
4. Within 72 hours, the care giver who observed or received the disclosure, shall submit a completed State of Michigan "Report of Known or Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect" to Children's Protective Services, or its equivalent to Adult Protective Services in accordance with the directions given at the time of the oral report. The event director may be a resource for completing this form.
5. The event director and the entire staff of the church-related function, event, activity or program shall cooperate with Children's Protective Services or Adult Protective Services.
6. Following contact with local Children's Protective Services or Adult Protective Services, the event director shall inform:
 1. The chairperson of the group sponsoring the church-related function, activity or event.
 2. Church staff person assigned to the ministries of the sponsoring group. The staff person shall inform the Conference Director of Connectional Ministries, the Bishop, and the District Superintendent of the sponsoring District.
 3. The facility director, manager or host church clergy person.
7. Notification of a parent or legal guardian of the alleged victim of abuse or neglect shall be determined by Children's Protective Services or Adult Protective Services. The event director shall follow the parent's or legal guardian's wishes regarding the continued participation of the involved child, youth or vulnerable adult, unless otherwise instructed by Children's Protective Services or Adult Protective Services.
8. Matters of known or suspected abuse or neglect are to be kept confidential, except as required by law, to assist appropriate agencies in their investigations, or as disclosed to Conference and church representatives

with a need to know such information consistent with the requirements of the law.

The incident is not to otherwise be discussed with persons other than those involved in the reporting.

9. The Protection Committee may edit this process to be in compliance with applicable State laws. Such edits shall be included in annual reports to annual conference.
- C) Reporting When The Alleged Perpetrator Is The Care Provider Or Church Employee
1. When the event director becomes aware of or receives a report of alleged abuse or neglect by a care provider or church employee, or the Care Provider is the known or suspected perpetrator, the event director or the person who received the disclosure or the one witnessing the abuse or neglect shall report the abuse or neglect as outlined in Section IV. B., in addition to notifying the corresponding District Superintendent.
- D) Reporting When The Alleged Perpetrator Is The Event Director
1. When anyone at a church-related function, activity or event becomes aware of or receives a report of alleged abuse or neglect by the event director, she/he shall follow the procedures outlined in Section W. B.
- E) Reporting When The Alleged Perpetrator Is A Michigan Conference Pastor, Clergy or Diaconal Minister
1. If the suspected or alleged perpetrator is on the premises he or she is to be isolated from the program and have no contact with children, youth or vulnerable adults.
 2. The event director shall follow the procedures outlined in Section IV. B.
- F) Reporting When The Alleged Perpetrator Is Another Child, Youth or Vulnerable Adult
1. If the suspected or alleged perpetrator is on premises he or she is to be isolated from the program and have no contact with children, youth or vulnerable adults.
 2. The event director shall follow the procedures outlined in Section IV. B
 3. Unless instructed otherwise by CPS, APS, or the local enforcement agency, the event director may confidentially inform the contact person for the facilities hosting the event and the parents or guardians of involved parties.
- G) Reporting All Other Suspected Cases of Abuse, Bullying Or Neglect
1. In all other cases of suspected abuse, bullying or neglect, the event director and the Conference Director of Connectional Ministry or designee shall be immediately notified, and the reporting procedures referenced in Section IV.B or Section N.H. shall be implemented.
- H) Section 380.1310b of The State of Michigan Law Addressing Bullying In Schools. Bullying is not a mandated reportable offense. However, it is behavior that must be reported to protect participants, care receivers, care givers and church and conference ministries. Reporting procedures follow:
1. The event director will be notified of alleged bullying incidents.

2. The event director will determine what, if any, follow up steps are to be taken.
3. Together the event director, in consultation with the Conference Director of Connectional Ministry or designee, shall determine what notification, if any, is appropriate to give to the parent or legal guardian, or the victim and the perpetrator or others.
4. The event director will submit a written report of the incident and response to the Conference Director of Connectional Ministry, or designee, for information purposes.

SECTION V: Follow-Up After Reports of Known Or Suspected Abuse, Bullying Or Neglect

A) General Goals And Objectives

1. After reporting procedures have been completed, the following goals and objectives as prioritized below shall be addressed:
 1. Protection for the alleged victim and other children, youth, and vulnerable adults from any continued exposure to abuse, bullying or neglect.
 2. Care for the spiritual, emotional and physical well-being of the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator.
 3. Respect and preservation of the legal rights of both the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator.
 4. Safeguarding the privacy of all parties involved.
 5. Care for the spiritual and emotional well-being of the church.
 6. Protection of the legal and financial interests of the church.

B) Investigation

1. In accordance with the laws of the State of Michigan, church workers (paid and volunteer) shall not conduct any investigation of reports or accusations of abuse or neglect.
2. Following the guidance of an attorney representing the church, the church shall cooperate in any proper investigations by the Children's Protective Services, Adult Protective Services, law enforcement agency, liability insurer and the parties involved.

C) Additional Response Requirements

When the alleged abuse or neglect involves (1) a church or District employee as the alleged perpetrator, (2) an abuse occurring on church property, or (3) a child, youth or vulnerable adult participating in any church-related function, activity, event or program, the following procedures shall be observed [For alleged abuse or neglect involving Michigan Conference United Methodist pastors or diaconal ministers see item 8 in this section]:

1. The status of the accused care provider (if applicable) shall be immediately suspended, and he or she shall not be permitted to continue providing any services for children, youth or vulnerable adults in any church-related function, activity, event or program. Authorization may be reinstated only

after satisfactory completion of the screening qualifications set forth in this Policy.

2. The Bishop or designee shall appoint a contact person to handle, oversee and/or represent the church in all communications with the Children's Protective Services, Adult Protective Services, law enforcement agencies, attorneys and investigators.
3. The Bishop or designee shall give written notice to the liability insurance carrier for the church.
4. If the alleged perpetrator is an employee of the church, the Conference Personnel Committee may discharge or place the employee on a leave of absence pending the completion of any investigations by the Children's Protective Services, Adult Protective Services, any responding law enforcement agencies and/or the completion on any legal proceedings. A leave of absence may be with or without pay, at the discretion of the Conference Personnel Committee. The employee may be reinstated after a leave of absence or discharge, only if approved by the MCPPIT with satisfactory completion of the screening qualifications set forth in this policy.
5. The Bishop or designee shall be the spokesperson solely authorized to respond to the media and general public. The designee may or may not be the same person appointed in item 2 of this section at the discretion of the Bishop. In all communications with media and the general public, the confidentiality of the victim and alleged perpetrator will be protected.
6. When appropriate the Bishop shall inform the church of the situation and how the church is responding to it. In all communications with the church, the confidentiality of the victim and alleged abuser will be protected.
7. Everyone involved in the response is strongly encouraged to document his/her activities and all communications regarding the suspected abuse or neglect.
8. When the alleged perpetrator is a Michigan Conference pastor, clergy person or diaconal minister, the Clergy Sexual Misconduct Policy shall be implemented.

D) Response To The Victim(s) And The Accused

1. The MC PPIT recommends that appropriate sensitive care be expressed to the victim, and the accused, as well as their families. Although the practices of abuse, bullying, neglect, or the making of false accusations are not to be condoned, we will continue to acknowledge that God's grace is available to all.

Conclusion

As Christians, we are called to live according to the gospel of Jesus. All persons are created by God. God intends all persons to have worth and dignity in their

relationships. We are a connected body, and when one part of this body is injured physically, emotionally or spiritually, the entire body is rendered less than God intended.

While the vast majority of those who work with our programs are of the highest moral and spiritual character, and are deeply committed to the needs of those to whom they minister, the reality is that the potential for abuse, bullying or neglect is present. Bethel's insurance policies require a consistent policy of screening, training, supervising and reporting. Further, we live in a litigious society which mandates the need for a church-wide policy that is clear and consistently enforced.

We understand that those with clear backgrounds and records might find this process burdensome or offensive. Yet if we are to take seriously our responsibility for children, youth and vulnerable adults, all applications for workers and volunteers must be treated in the same manner. This policy is an act of hospitality to those who may be at risk due to their age, size, and mental and/or physical capacities. We thank you for your understanding and cooperation as we endeavor to make our programs safe and secure for all who participate.

VI. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

1. **Abuse:** Abuse means harm or threatened harm to an individual's health or welfare through physical abuse, bullying, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, maltreatment, and/or sexual harassment. For the purposes of this policy, 'hazing' is considered a form of abuse.
2. **Adult:** means a person at least 18 years of age.
3. **Applicant:** a person who is applying to be an authorized care provider.
4. **Appropriate:** conduct that one could reasonably assume would be acceptable and permissible by the child's parent or guardian.
5. **Bullying:** Intentional behavior that is meant to hurt and dominate another person or group of persons. It is characterized by an imbalance of power between the individual who bullies and the target. Bullying can be physical, verbal, emotional, social, spiritual, or sexual. Cyberbullying is the use of technology for the same purpose. This includes, and not limited to, the following:
 - a) Substantially interfering with their opportunities, benefits, or programs involving the church, its districts, or its agencies.
 - b) Adversely affecting their ability to participate in or to benefit from the programs or activities of Bethel UMC by placing the individual in reasonable fear of physical harm or causing substantial emotional distress.
 - c) Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on their physical or emotional health.
 - d) Causing substantial disruption in, or interference with, the orderly operation of the programs or activities of the church
6. **Care Provider:** anyone (including employees, volunteers, lay and clergy) charged with the supervising of children, youth, and vulnerable adults during a church event or activity. An authorized Care Provider has completed the Bethel UMC Protection Policy requirements for all staff members (paid or volunteer) who will work with children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
7. **Conference:** refers to the Michigan Conference of The United Methodist Church.
8. **DHS:** means the Department of Health and Human Services in the state of Michigan which guards the safety and welfare of children, youth and vulnerable adults.
9. **Event Director:** refers to the person overseeing all personnel and programming at a church function, event, or activity.
10. **Event Site:** the location of a church related function, event, or activity. This does not exclusively apply to a United Methodist facility.
11. **Leader:** anyone responsible for overseeing a specific activity during a church event.

12. **Negligence:** failure to act as a reasonably prudent person would do in the same or similar circumstance. It can include failing to prevent an act of abuse or omission of an act that would ensure the health, welfare, and safety of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult.
 - a) Negligent treatment, including the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, health care and protection from abuse.
 - b) Placing a child, youth, and vulnerable adult at an unreasonable risk to the health or welfare of a vulnerable adult, child or youth by failure of the parent, legal guardian or any other person responsible for the health or welfare of a child, youth, and vulnerable adult to intervene to eliminate that risk when that person is able to do so, and has or should have knowledge of the risk (see State of Michigan Compiled Laws Act # 238, Public Acts of 1975, 22 Sections 722.622.2d).
 - c) Placing a child, youth, and vulnerable adult at an unreasonable risk to the health or welfare of a vulnerable adult, child or youth by failure of the parent, legal guardian or any other person responsible for the health or welfare of a child, youth, and vulnerable adult to intervene to eliminate that risk when that person is able to do so, and has or should have knowledge of the risk (see State of Michigan Compiled Laws Act # 238, Public Acts of 1975, 22 Sections 722.622.2d).
13. **Parent or Guardian:** means any parent, step-parent, foster parent, grandparent or appointed guardian who has the general responsibility for the health, education or welfare of a child, youth, and vulnerable adult.
14. **Participants:** Participants are children, youth, or vulnerable adults, as well as all others, who are registered, enrolled, attending, or otherwise participating in an event or activity sponsored by or under the auspices of the church.
15. **Physical Abuse:** Physical abuse is any non-accidental act or failure to act that results in bodily harm. Physical abuse may result from punishment to a person that is overly punitive or inappropriate to the individual's age or condition.
16. **Protection Policy Conunittee:** Committee is the group responsible for ensuring the implementation of this Policy.
17. **Sexual Abuse:** any conduct of a sexual nature which violates or attempts to violate the free choice and consent of another person, and includes any criminal sexual act defined by any federal, state, or municipal law, which includes but is not limited to rape, sexual molestation, sexual battery, aggravated sexual battery, lewd and lascivious behavior, enticement of a child, indecent solicitation of a child, aggravated indecent solicitation of a child, exhibiting sexually explicit material, or indecent liberties with a child, youth, or vulnerable adult.
18. **Sexual Misconduct:** the intentional touch of the intimate parts or the clothing covering the immediate area of the intimate parts of a child, youth or vulnerable adult.
19. **Sexual Exploitation:** means allowing, permitting or encouraging children, youth, and vulnerable adults to engage in prostitution or in the

photographing, filming, creating electronic or computer generated images or any other form of depicting a child, youth, and vulnerable adult engaged in actual suggestive sexual conduct (see Michigan Compiled Laws Act # 238, Public Acts of 1975, Section 722.322.2 (1)).

20. **Sexual Explicit Material:** means any printed, electronic or computer generated matter, picture, sculpture or sound recording which can reasonably be construed as being produced for the purpose of stimulating sexual excitement, arousal or gratification.
21. **Sexual Harassment:** Sexual harassment is any sexually related behavior that is unwelcome, offensive, or which fails to respect the rights of others. Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome advance, a request for a sexual favor, and any other verbal, nonverbal, or physical contact of a nature that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.
22. **Shall, Should, May:** were carefully chosen terms used in this Policy, giving recognition to their different meanings. "Shall" is to be considered as mandatory, "may" is to be considered permissive, and "should" is to be considered a term of strong encouragement.
23. **Event Staff Persons:** authorized persons who provide leadership and/or care for events of Bethel UMC, they are volunteers or paid.
24. **Volunteer:** any person receiving no salary or wages for providing any services, care, guidance, assistance or supervision for any children, youth, and vulnerable adults at Bethel UMC
25. **Vulnerable Adult:** an individual who because of age, developmental disability, mental illness, or physical handicap requires supervision or personal care or lacks the personal and social skills required to live independently.

MANDATED REPORTER'S RESOURCE GUIDE OVERVIEW



Have a hand in protecting children.

Mandated Reporters' Hotline

Mandated reporters can use this hotline when the Centralized Intake for Abuse & Neglect office has not been adequately responsive to their concerns. The hotline # is 1-877-277-2585. When they make the call, they will be asked for the log number that the local CPS office gave them when they reported suspected child abuse or neglect.

Contact the Children's Protective Services Program Office for questions at (517) 335-3704

Michigan Child Protection Law

The Michigan Child Protection Law, 1975 PA 238, MCL 722.621 et. seq., requires the reporting of child abuse and neglect by certain persons (called mandated reporters) and permits the reporting of child abuse and neglect by all persons. The Child Protection Law includes the legal requirements for reporting, investigating, and responding to child abuse and neglect. This document is to assist mandated reporters in understanding their responsibilities under the Child Protection Law. For copies of the Child Protection Law, contact the local Department of Human Services (DHS) office or go to <http://www.michigan.gov/dhs>.

Child's Disclosure: The Role of Mandated Reporters

During disclosure, mandated reporters should maintain eye contact and avoid displaying any signs of shock or disapproval. Mandated reporters should only ask open-ended questions that allow the child to freely discuss the incident without being led during the conversation. For example, "How did you get that bruise?" Again, these discussions should only proceed to the point needed to determine whether a report needs to be made to DHS.

Reporting Obligations

The Child Protection Law requires mandated reporters to make an immediate verbal report to DHS upon suspecting child abuse and neglect, followed by a written report within 72 hours.

The reporter is not expected to investigate the matter, know the legal definitions of child abuse and neglect, or even know the name of the perpetrator. The Child Protection Law is intended to make reporting simple and places responsibility for determining appropriate action with the Children's Protective Services (CPS) division of the DHS.

Mandated reporters must also notify the head of their organization of the report. Reporting the suspected allegations of child abuse and/or neglect to the head of the organization does not fulfill the requirement to report directly to DHS.

The Verbal Report

The information in a CPS report needs to be provided by the individual who actually has observed the injuries or had contact with the child regarding the report. Contact the CPS Centralized Intake for Abuse & Neglect at 1-855-444-3911 to make the verbal report.

The Written Report

Within 72 hours of making the verbal report, mandated reporters must file a written report as required in the Child Protection Law. DHS encourages the use of Report of Suspected or Actual Child Abuse or Neglect (DHS-3200) form. Access the form at www.michigan.gov/mandatedreporter under Resources. Email: DHS-CPS -CIGroup@michigan.gov Cr fax: 616-977-1154 or 616-977-1158.

Confidentiality

CPS will not disclose the identity of a reporting person.

Indicators of Child Abuse/Neglect

Determining when to report situations of suspected child abuse/neglect can be difficult. When in doubt, contact DHS for consultation. Below are some of the commonly accepted physical and behavioral warning signs associated with various forms of child abuse and neglect.

	Physical Indicators	Behavior Indicators
Physical Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bruises more numerous than expected from explanation of incident. • Unexpected bruises, welts or loop marks in various stages of healing. • Adult/human bite marks. • Bald spots or missing clumps of hair. • Unexplained fractures, skin lacerations, punctures, or abrasions. • Swollen lips and/or chipped teeth. • Linear/parallel marks on cheeks and/or temple area. • Crescent-shaped bruising caused by pinching. • Puncture wounds that resemble distinctive objects. • Bruising behind the ears. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-destructive/self mutilation. • Withdrawn and/or aggressive- behavior extremes. • Uncomfortable/skittish with physical contact. • Arrives at school late. • Expresses fear of being at home. • Chronic runaway (adolescents). • Complains of soreness or moves uncomfortably. • Wears clothing inappropriate to weather to cover body. • Lacks impulse control (e.g., inappropriate outbursts).
	Physical Indicators	Behavior Indicators
Physical Neglect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distended stomach, emaciated. • Unattended medical needs. • Lack of supervision. • Consistent signs of hunger, inappropriate dress, poor hygiene. • Sudden or unexplained weight change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly displays fatigue or listlessness; falls asleep in class. • Steals, hoards or begs for food. • Reports that no caretaker is at home.
Sexual Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain or itching in genital area. • Bruises or bleeding in genital area. • Sexually transmitted disease. • Frequent urinary or yeast infections. • Sudden or unexplained weight change. • Pregnancy 12 years or under. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Withdrawal, chronic depression. • Sexual behaviors or references that are unusual for the child's age. • Seductive or promiscuous behavior. • Poor self-esteem, self devaluation, lack of confidence. • Suicide attempts. • Hysteria, lack of emotional control.

REPORT OF ACTUAL OR SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Michigan Department of Human Services

Was complaint phoned to DHS?					
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input type="checkbox"/> No		▶ If yes, Log # _____ ▶ If no, contact Centralized Intake (855-444-3911) immediately	
INSTRUCTIONS: REPORTING PERSON: Complete items 1-19 (20-28 should be completed by medical personnel, if applicable). Send to Centralized Intake at the address list on page 2.					1. Date
2. List of child(ren) suspected of being abused or neglected (Attach additional sheets if necessary)					
NAME		BIRTH DATE	SOCIAL SECURITY #	SEX	RACE
3. Mother's name					
4. Father's name					
5. Child(ren)'s address (No. & Street)		6. City	7. County	8. Phone No.	
9. Name of alleged perpetrator of abuse or neglect		10. Relationship to child(ren)			
11. Person(s) the child(ren) living with when abuse/neglect occurred		12. Address, City & Zip Code where abuse/neglect occurred			
13. Describe injury or conditions and reason for suspicion of abuse or neglect					

14. Source of Complaint (Add reporter code below)					
01 Private Physician/Physician's Assistant		13 School Administrator		45 Private Agency Social Worker	
02 Hosp/Clinic Physician/Physician's Assistant		14 School Counselor		46 Court Social Worker	
03 Coroner/Medical Examiner		21 Law Enforcement		47 Other Social Worker	
04 Dentist/Register Dental Hygienist		22 Domestic Violence Providers		48 FIS/ES Worker/Supervisor	
05 Audiologist		23 Friend of the Court		49 Social Services Specialist/Manager (CPS, FC, etc.)	
06 Nurse (Not School)		25 Clergy		51 Hospital/Clinic Personnel	
07 Paramedic/EMT		31 Child Care Provider		52 DHS Facility Personnel	
08 Psychologist		41 Hospital/Clinic Social Worker		53 DMH Facility Personnel	
09 Marriage/Family Therapist		42 DHS Facility Social Worker		54 Other Public Social Agency Personnel	
10 Licensed Counselor		43 DMH Facility Social Worker		55 Private Social Agency Personnel	
11 School Nurse		44 Other Public Social Worker		56 Court Personnel	
12 Teacher					
15. Reporting person's name		Report Code (see above)		15a. Name of reporting organization (school, hospital, etc.)	
15b. Address (No. & Street)		15c. City		15d. State	15e. Zip Code
					15f. Phone No.
16. Reporting person's name		Report Code (see above)		16a. Name of reporting organization (school, hospital, etc.)	
16b. Address (No. & Street)		16c. City		16d. State	16e. Zip Code
					16f. Phone No.
17. Reporting person's name		Report Code (see above)		17a. Name of reporting organization (school, hospital, etc.)	
17b. Address (No. & Street)		17c. City		17d. State	17e. Zip Code
					17f. Phone No.
18. Reporting person's name		Report Code (see above)		18a. Name of reporting organization (school, hospital, etc.)	
18b. Address (No. & Street)		18c. City		18d. State	18e. Zip Code
					18f. Phone No.
19. Reporting person's name		Report Code (see above)		19a. Name of reporting organization (school, hospital, etc.)	
19b. Address (No. & Street)		19c. City		19d. State	19e. Zip Code
					19f. Phone No.

TO BE COMPLETED BY MEDICAL PERSONNEL WHEN PHYSICAL EXAMINATION HAS BEEN DONE

20. Summary report and conclusions of physical examination (Attach Medical Documentation)		
21. Laboratory report	22. X-Ray	
23. Other (specify)	24. History or physical signs of previous abuse/neglect <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
25. Prior hospitalization or medical examination for this child	PLACES	
DATES		
26. Physician's Signature	27. Date	28. Hospital (if applicable)
Department of Human Services (DHS) will not discriminate against any individual or group because of race, religion, age, national origin, color, height, weight, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, political beliefs or disability. If you need help with reading, writing, hearing, etc., under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are invited to make your needs known to a DHS office in your area.		AUTHORITY: P.A. 238 of 1975. COMPLETION: Mandatory. PENALTY: None.

INSTRUCTIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION:

This form is to be completed as the written follow-up to the oral report (as required in Sec. 3 (1) of 1975 PA 238, as amended) and mailed to Centralized Intake for Abuse & Neglect. Indicate if this report was phoned into DHS as a report of suspected CA/N. If so, indicate the Log # (if known). The reporting person is to fill out as completely as possible items 1-19. Only medical personnel should complete items 20-28.

Mail this form to:

Centralized Intake for Abuse & Neglect
5321 28th Street Court S.E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

OR

Fax this form to 616-977-1154 or 616-977-1158

Or email this form to DHS-CPS-CIGroup@michigan.gov

- Date – Enter the date the form is being completed.
- List child(ren) suspected of being abused or neglected – Enter available information for the child(ren) believed to be abused or neglected. Indicate if child has a disability that may need accommodation.
- Mother's name – Enter mother's name (or mother substitute) and other available information. Indicate if mother has a disability that may need accommodation.
- Father's name – Enter father's name (or father substitute) and other available information. Indicate if father has a disability that may need accommodation.
- Child(ren)'s address – Enter the address of the child(ren).
- Phone – Enter phone number of the household where child(ren) resides.
- Name of alleged perpetrator of abuse or neglect – Indicate person(s) suspected or presumed to be responsible for the alleged abuse or neglect.
- Relationship to child(ren) – Indicate the relationship to the child(ren) of the alleged perpetrator of neglect or abuse, e.g., parent, grandparent, babysitter.
- Person(s) child(ren) living with when abuse/neglect occurred – Enter name(s). Indicate if individuals have a disability that may need accommodation.
- Address where abuse / neglect occurred.
- Describe injury or conditions and reason of suspicion of abuse or neglect – Indicate the basis for making a report and the information available about the abuse or neglect.
- Source of complaint – Check appropriate box noting professional group or appropriate category.

Note: If abuse or neglect is suspected in a hospital, also check hospital.

DHS Facility – Refers to any group home, shelter home, halfway house or institution operated by the Department of Human Services.

DCH Facility – Refers to any institution or facility operated by the Department of Community Health.

15.-19 - Reporting person's name - Enter the name and address of person(s) reporting this matter.

Helpful Websites

Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church

<http://michiganumc.org/ministries/wmc/abuse-prevention/> congregational-life/

[Note: This website address is likely to change with the transition to the Michigan United Methodist Conference Structure.]

This website contains links to information on how to covenant with registered adult sex offenders in your congregation to create a safe and welcoming environment for children, youth, vulnerable adults, and for the registered adult sex offender.

Michigan Department of Human Services michigan.gov/dhs

In the menu, go to the "Adult & Children's Services" tab. Under "Abuse & Neglect", select the "Forms & Publications" item in the sub-menu. Here you will find a host of information, including the following documents: DHS 3200 reporting form; DHS 3 Child Protection Law; DHS 112 Mandated Reporters Resource Guide; DHS 1929 Central Registry Clearance Request form.

Michigan State Police michigan.gov/rnsp

In the menu, go to the "Services" tab. Here you can find access to the Sex Offender Registry, and the Criminal Records History links. The latter provides information and a tutorial on how to access and use the Internet Criminal History Access Tool (ICHAT) for criminal background checks.

United Methodist Church 501(c)(3) Group

Ruling Website www.umcgroupruling.org

This website will be helpful to churches seeking to utilize ICHAT to conduct criminal background screenings. It allows local churches to obtain documentation of inclusion in the United Methodist Church's Denominational 501(c)(3) group ruling. With this documentation, churches qualify for free use of the ICHAT service.

National Sex Offender Public Website www.nsopw.gov

In the menu, go to the "Search" tab to check names of potential workers with children, youth, and vulnerable adults. This is a database of registered sex offenders from all 50 states and territories.

I affirm that I have read the Protection Policy of Bethel United Methodist Church.

I agree to adhere to these directions of the church.

Signature

Date