

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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Introduction. A Letter from the Pastor

Dear Friends,

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, like other voluntary, religious, educational, and social service organizations, is concerned with difficult and sensitive issues relating to personal ethics and sexual misconduct, especially as these relate to children in our midst. Churches are by nature trusting institutions, which have traditionally accepted the services of anyone expressing an interest in working as a volunteer with children.

While asking sensitive questions of potential youth workers, teachers or anyone closely involved with our children can be seen as distasteful and offensive, not doing so can make a church extremely susceptible to incidents of child abuse or molestation. A single incident involving a child, or even an adult, devastates the individuals involved, and can do the same to the entire church community.

Because Good Shepherd Lutheran Church is concerned for the welfare of all its members, beginning with the youngest infant, we have worked to create a “Child Protection Policy” which though relatively simple, seeks to take effective steps designed to reduce the likelihood of abuse in our church. The goal of this Policy is to assure our church is a safe place for children, youth, and all of our members and guests.

To that end, a Youth Protection Policy has recently been adopted by our Church Council. All adults participating in programs involving significant contact with children will be contacted and asked to read the policy and to sign a statement indicating they have done so. We see this as a proactive approach toward protecting our children and the adults that generously give of their time to work with the children. I encourage you to speak with me or Denise Steene if you have questions or comments about the Policy. We continue to seek our Lord’s Spirit and guidance as our life together as a caring and responsible community of faith continues to deepen in the months and years ahead.

Yours in Ministry Together,

Ray W. Michener

Interim Pastor

May 9, 2013

Chapter 1. Purpose

Children are our sacred trust from a loving God. Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (also referred to as Good Shepherd) joyfully answers the call to provide a nurturing and dynamic Christian environment that will foster our children's faith, their guiding light. We seek to ensure the safety of all children participating in the programs and activities of the church by establishing the following guidelines with regard to the conduct of adults and children. This Child Protection Policy directs that supervision of activities involving children and adults be conducted in a manner that minimizes the risk of abuse or of false allegations of abuse. We seek to protect the children who participate in the activities sponsored by Good Shepherd from abuse and to protect Good Shepherd's employees and volunteers from false allegations of abuse. Good Shepherd can, through adherence to this Child Protection Policy, make every effort to ensure that persons placed in positions of responsibility and trust with respect to the children of the church, are persons deserving of that trust and responsibility.

This Child Protection Policy shall be available in the church office to all visitors, members, and staff of the church.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Those who accept the responsibility of working with children at Good Shepherd agree to:

- treat children with respect and dignity;
- do their best to prevent abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children participating in activities;
- not engage in or condone acts of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse;
- comply with Good Shepherd Lutheran Church's Child Protection Policy; and
- report any abuse, inappropriate behaviors, or possible policy violations.

All members, visitors, and guests at Good Shepherd should follow this policy. We ask anyone using the building, including community groups and others not directly affiliated with the church, to acknowledge and comply with this Child Protection Policy. The Chairs of Education Ministry, Youth Ministry, and the Staff Support Committee, working with the Pastor, Coordinator of Education Ministry, and Volunteer Coordinator, shall assume responsibility for overseeing the Child Protection Policy. Such responsibility includes supervision and implementation of the policy as well as providing opportunities for education and training about the policy. The intention of the Child Protection Policy is to protect. The Policy is not intended to substantially interfere with the nurturing, teaching, and supervising of children.

Chapter 2. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

Church: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

Child: any individual under the age of 18.

Child Protection Policy Oversight Group: responsible for overseeing the policy, receiving reports of abuse, conducting training, reviewing applications, checking references, requesting background checks, etc.; consists of the Pastor, Coordinator of Education Ministry, Volunteer Coordinator, and President of the congregation, as well as other council members requested to serve.

Adult: any person age 18 or older.

Trained Adult (TA): any person age 18 or older, who also has:

- attended a child protection policy training meeting and has a signed Child Protection Policy Acceptance form on file.
- completed pages 1 and 2 of the Application to Work with Children.

Shepherd (Trained Adult with References): any person age 18 or older who has:

- attended a child protection policy training meeting and has a signed Child Protection Policy Acceptance on file.
- completed an application to work with children, including references.

Lead Shepherd (Trained Adult with References and Background Check): any person age 18 or older who has:

- attended a child protection policy training meeting and has a signed Child Protection Policy Acceptance on file.
- completed an application to work with children, including references.
- had a background check done with favorable results.

Staff: anyone who works for Good Shepherd Lutheran Church for salary or wages.

Volunteer: anyone who provides services for Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and receives no compensation in the form of salary, wages, or other pecuniary benefits.

Child Abuse: injury of a child by an adult or older child that is not accidental. It may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, or sexual abuse.

Child Physical Abuse: non-accidental bodily injury of a child through physical contact or mistreatment.

Child Sexual Abuse: any form of sexual contact or exploitation in which a child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator. It includes behaviors that involve touching and non-touching aspects. Child sexual abuse is criminal behavior that involves children in sexual behaviors for which they are not personally, socially, and developmentally ready.

Types of child sexual abuse that involve touching include:

- Fondling,
- Oral, genital, and anal penetration,
- Intercourse,
- Forcible rape.

Types of child sexual abuse that do not involve touching include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal comments,
- Risqué or sexual jokes,
- Pornographic videos and photography,
- Obscene phone calls,
- Exhibitionism,
- Allowing children to witness sexual activity.

Sexual abuse perpetrated by an adult is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a child and an adult. This includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of the

adult or child. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered to be forced whether or not the child consents to it.

Sexual abuse perpetrated by a child is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between children when there is no consent, when consent is not possible, or when one child has power over the other child. This includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of any of the children.

Child Emotional Abuse: any language directed toward a child by an adult that is intended to cause emotional anxiety, pain, or other severe emotional disturbance. It is mental or emotional injury to a child that results in an observable and material impairment in the child’s growth, development, or psychological functioning.

Neglect: the failure to provide for a child's basic needs or the failure to protect a child from harm.

Economic Exploitation: the deliberate misplacement, exploitation, or wrongful temporary or permanent use of a child's belongings or money.

Chapter 3. Supervision Guidelines

Two-Adult Guidelines

Generally, two unrelated (e.g., not spouse, sibling, parent or child) adults should be present at all activities involving children. When two related adults are leading or chaperoning activities with children outside of Sunday School, at least one additional adult must be present.

- A. **Open Spaces.** When many people are in the building (e.g., Sunday mornings) and contact with a child is incidental to what the adult is doing, it is sufficient that the single adult is in an open space (fellowship hall, kitchen, lounge, sanctuary) and anyone can look in on them. The choir room, upstairs library, and any room with the door shut are not considered open spaces.
- B. **Teens.** An exception to the two-adult guideline is when two teenagers (ages 13 to 17) are watching children in the church building during adult classes, potluck dinners, etc.
- C. **Qualifications by Activity.** For certain types of activities, one or more of the adults should be a Trained Adult, Shepherd, or Lead Shepherd. The chart below illustrates some common categories of activities that require one or more of the adults involved have additional qualifications.
- D. **Ratios.** Activity leaders should use good judgment in requiring that an appropriate number of adults participate and in considering the level of qualification for each adult.

Common Categories of Activities	Qualifications of Adults	Accommodations and Requirements
Overnights Away from Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one Lead Shepherd per trip and at least one Shepherd or higher of each gender, one of which may be the required Lead Shepherd • Other adults attending should be Shepherds or Lead Shepherds 	<p>Best efforts should be made to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - children are given appropriate privacy in the areas of sleeping, changing, and bathing. - children and adults do not bathe in the same facility at the same time - children of the opposite gender do not change or bathe together. - children of the opposite gender do not sleep in the same room together, unless

		<p>they are siblings and a parent has requested this sleeping arrangement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - children of the opposite gender may be permitted to sleep in the same room if an entire group of children along with the supervising adults are sleeping in one big room together. In these group sleepover situations, parents should be informed of the sleeping arrangements advance and asked to give explicit permission for their child's participation in the event. The required written permission slip from a parent or guardian should expressly acknowledge that the activity is coed. - the leader of the overnight activity has an emergency phone number for a parent or guardian of each child participating in the event.
Overnights at Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One Lead Shepherd and at least one Shepherd or higher of each gender, one of which may be the required Lead Shepherd ● Other adults are Trained Adult or higher 	<p>Best efforts should be made to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - children are given appropriate privacy in the areas of sleeping, changing, and bathing. - children and adults do not bathe in the same facility at the same time. - children of the opposite gender do not change or bathe together. - children of the opposite gender do not sleep in the same room together, unless they are siblings and a parent has requested this sleeping arrangement. - children of the opposite gender may be permitted to sleep in the same room if an entire group of children along with the supervising adults are sleeping in one big room together (e.g., at the Winter Lock-in when everyone sleeps in the lounge area). In these group sleepover situations, parents should be informed of the sleeping arrangements advance and asked to give explicit permission for their child's participation in the event. The required written permission slip from a parent or

		<p>guardian should expressly acknowledge that the activity is coed.</p> <p>- the leader of the overnight activity has an emergency phone number for a parent or guardian of each child participating in the event.</p>
Day Trips Away from Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One Lead Shepherd per trip ● Other adults are Trained Adult or higher 	<p>Best efforts should be made to:</p> <p>- avoid having one child alone in a car with an adult, unless the adult is the child's parent or guardian.</p>
Regular Activities with Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All adults regularly interacting with children should be Trained Adult or higher 	
Sunday School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● As a regular activity with children, Sunday School teachers should be Trained Adult or higher ● Although two adults are generally required for any activity involving children, during Sunday School, when children are attending classes in the spaces separated by dividers in the fellowship hall it is permissible to have one adult present in each divided space, as long as there are at least two adults (Trained Adult or higher) present in the fellowship hall. ● Related adults may work together to teach Sunday School. 	
One-Time Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We prefer that adults who work with children be Trained Adult or higher. However, when it would unreasonably impede an activity to require the adults working with children to be trained, two adults without training may volunteer to fulfill the two adult guideline. 	

	If an adult repeatedly volunteered with children (substitute teacher, chaperone, parent helper, etc.), that adult should become a Trained Adult.	
Non-church member use of building and non-church sponsored building activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide adult supervision for children; ideally having at least two adults with a group of children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make best efforts to comply with the spirit and intent of the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Child Protection Policy • Make people in your group aware of the Child Protection Policy

- E. **Working Alone.** If absolutely necessary, an adult may work alone with children if there is visual access to the room on the main floor of the building, e.g., open door or room with a window in the door. Prior to working alone with children, the adult should make a reasonable effort to ensure that a second adult is present or that another adult may check in without advance notice. The adult in charge will typically inform the parents that there is not a second adult present. If only one adult is present or available, that adult can cancel the event and inform parents that there was not adequate supervision available to have the event.

Personal Conduct

A. Common expressions of affection (e.g., hugs), affirmation (e.g., pats on the back, high fives), blessings (e.g., making the sign of the cross on the forehead, laying on of hands), support or physical caretaking (e.g., diaper changing), when done without sexual connotations, are appropriate in this community of caring Christians. Expressions of affection shall not be excessive or imposed upon others. No child should be made to feel guilty if they do not wish to participate in these expressions of affection. Children will be made aware that they are free to participate or not, as they feel comfortable. Children must be allowed to use the bathroom on their own with adults verifying that the bathroom is safe (e.g., no unknown adults in the bathroom, etc.) and waiting at the entrance to the bathroom for the child to finish.

B. Adults shall not touch or interact with children in any way that is intended to be sexually stimulating. Any activity of this type is illegal, as well as a violation of trust.

C. Adults shall not engage in inappropriate behavior with children. Examples include but are not limited to: seeking private time with children, taking children on outings or overnight trips without other adults, swearing in front of children, or making suggestive comments to children.

D. Corporal punishment or verbal abuse is never permitted.

Open Door Policy

All spaces where activities with children are taking place, including but not limited to classrooms, rehearsal spaces, and child care rooms, shall be open to visits at any time without prior notice. These visits should be made in a manner that is not disruptive to the activity. When possible, the door to spaces where activities with children are taking place should remain open. If an activity is taking place in multiple locations within the building, the leader of the activity, if possible, should circulate among the locations.

Discipline

All adults leading programs involving contact with children will be guided by the following constructive discipline guidelines in order to maintain order:

1. If a child is behaving inappropriately, the adult will tell the child specifically what he or she is doing that is not acceptable and state what the expected behavior is, e.g., “We do not throw blocks. We use blocks for building.” If this is not effective, the child should be guided to another activity.

2. If inappropriate behavior continues, the child may be placed in an area of the room where he or she will work alone, away from the other students for a brief period of time, the number of minutes not to exceed the age of the child.

3. If the child's disruptive behavior continues after these steps have been taken, the child may be taken to the parent, Sunday School Superintendent, Education Ministry Coordinator, or other responsible adults. If a child must be removed from a classroom or other activity, the situation will be discussed with his or her parents.

4. If misbehavior occurs at an offsite location, the parent may be called to pick up the child.

5. In no case is an adult permitted to physically or verbally abuse a child who is misbehaving. There will be no use of corporal punishment.

Permission Slips

Children should have parental or guardian permission in advance to participate in any overnight activity or activity that takes place away from Good Shepherd's grounds. Permission should be given in writing and signed and dated by a parent or guardian. The permission slip will identify the name and date of the activity in which the child will be participating, as well as provide a basic description of what will occur.

Transportation

A. It is recommended that children be transported in groups rather than alone for church-sponsored activities. A child's parent or guardian may give permission for an unaccompanied adult to drive a single child or children to or from a church-sponsored activity. Parental permission for transportation as part of a planned event should be obtained in writing.

B. Children legally required to ride in a car seat or booster seat must be transported using the appropriate safety seat. All other passengers shall wear a seatbelt while a vehicle is in motion or turned on.

C. This policy is not intended to prohibit staff or adult volunteers, when two are available to assist, from offering a ride home to children in an emergency situation. The adults should make reasonable attempts to contact parents or guardians prior to providing the ride. The adults providing the ride should inform the child's parents or leave a message stating the expected departure, travel, and arrival times. The child or children should ride in the backseat.

D. No person under the age of 21 shall drive other children as part of a church activity.

E. Every driver should have a valid driver's license. Every driver should drive a registered and insured vehicle.

F. If a group is traveling in one vehicle, there must be two unrelated trained adults in the vehicle. If a group is traveling in more than one vehicle, care should be taken so that a single vehicle with one adult driver is not separated from the group for an extended length of time.

Digital Privacy

A key ingredient for a safe and healthy experience is the respect for privacy. Advances in technology have enabled forms of social interaction that can extend beyond the appropriate use of cameras, recording devices, and handheld electronics.

A. To ensure full participation and the opportunity for a positive experience, children may be prohibited from bringing handheld electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, laptops, iPods, tablets, etc.) to youth events or other church-sponsored functions. If children do bring these items to a church event, the adults in charge of the event can require that the items be placed in a box or other location away from the children for the

duration of the event and then returned to the children at the conclusion of the event.

B. Children and adults shall not send sexually explicit or suggestive texts, images, videos, or other inappropriate content electronically. Children and adults shall not post sexually explicit materials on websites or social media sites.

C. Children and adults can opt out of having their photos appear on the Good Shepherd website, social media, or other publications.

Chapter 4. Application, Screening and Training Guidelines

Application Process

All adults who seek to work with children at Good Shepherd should attend a Child Protection Policy training session, complete an application to work with children, and sign the Child Protection Policy acceptance statement. Those adults who would like to work with children on a regular basis or plan and lead events will need to complete an Application to Work with Children and in some cases submit to a background check. The application requests information about the applicant's suitability to work with children and asks for references that can verify the applicant's experience with children. Please see the "Qualifications by Activity" table in chapter 3 to determine the level of information requested for the position you seek.

Screening and Background Checks

A. Applications are reviewed and an interview may be required with one or more members of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group. Applicants may also be asked to participate in an oral screening to determine suitability for work with children. Applications and related papers are confidential and maintained in locked files with access limited to the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group (Pastor, Coordinator of Education Ministry, Volunteer Coordinator, and the Congregation Council President).

B. Good Shepherd will use its discretion in reviewing and investigating the history of each applicant and in determining the activities for which a criminal background check is required. In general, any adults, both staff and volunteer, who will regularly have significant contact with children, be with children off the church property, chaperone overnight events, work in the nursery, or serve as youth group leaders may be asked to submit to a criminal background check.

C. Updated criminal background checks will be performed periodically, as deemed appropriate, usually every 5 years. Good Shepherd may request the following information when conducting a background check:

- Social Security identification
- County courthouse check
- Nationwide criminal check
- Driving record

The cost of the background check will be paid for by Good Shepherd.

D. In certain circumstances, Good Shepherd may conduct a registered sex offender review, instead of or in addition to the criminal background check referenced above, by searching the individual's name on the Department of Justice website at www.nsopr.gov. The registered sex offender review may be repeated at various times throughout the individual's service as an employee or volunteer who works with or comes into contact with children.

E. There will be a procedure for reviewing background checks and other sensitive information from references, oral screening, sex offender review, the application, etc.

- a. Types of information that may merit additional consideration include but are not limited to: criminal acts and criminal behavior, sex crimes, financial crimes, and drug crimes.

- b. When the background check (or other information) is received, two members of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group (Pastor, Coordinator of Education Ministry, Volunteer Coordinator, and President of the congregation) will review it. Each background check is considered individually and all decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. Child Protection Policy Oversight Group members will be reminded of the sensitive and confidential nature of the information they possess and asked that any discussions about the information be limited to the confidential Group meetings.
 - i. If no information of concern is contained in the report, the applicant will be able to work with children.
 - ii. If there are any concerns, a meeting is called with three members of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group to discuss the report and a decision will be made by vote. Minutes of this meeting will be kept with the application materials.
 - 1. If an individual will not be allowed to work with children, the Pastor or the Pastor's designee will arrange a personal meeting with the individual to deliver the news.
 - 2. If an individual is allowed to work with children, the Coordinator of Education Ministry (or designee) will deliver the news.
- c. Applicants deemed by Good Shepherd to pose a threat to children will not be permitted to participate in Good Shepherd's activities for children and may be required to be with an assigned chaperone when participating in general church activities where children may be present.

Training

A. We encourage all adults of the congregation to attend a Child Protection Policy training to better understand the goals of the policy and help to safeguard our children and the adults working with children. All adults seeking to work regularly with children must be trained on the requirements of Good Shepherd's Child Protection Policy. A signed Child Protection Policy Acceptance Statement will be evidence of completion of training. Adults working with children may be asked to retake the training periodically.

B. Communication about and an explanation of the Child Protection Policy will be included annually in all training and orientation for programs at Good Shepherd involving contact with children. The responsibility for ensuring the Child Protection Policy is included as part of training programs shall rest with the Coordinator of Education Ministry, Volunteer Coordinator, and Congregation Council members.

Chapter 5. Reporting and Responding

In maintaining our protection of children, adults are encouraged to report abuse, suspected abuse, or neglect. A person may suspect abuse by noting signs of abuse, being told of abuse, or witnessing conduct that is of concern. Some signs of sexual abuse are included in Appendix C. Do not hesitate to report abuse. When you report what you have seen or heard, you may help a child to stay safe. If you have noticed the warning signs of abuse and neglect, please call. If you do not report your suspicions, the abuse of a child might continue. You should have a reasonable suspicion of the abuse, but you do not have to "prove" the abuse or be positive that it occurred. If you report in good faith, you are immune from civil or criminal liability.

Reporting and Documentation

- A. If the child is in immediate danger or there is an emergency situation, call 911.

- B. If you suspect that a child is physically, sexually, or emotionally abused or neglected, call the City of Alexandria Child Protective Services, 703-746-5800, as soon as possible.
- C. All knowledge about abuse or suspected abuse should also be shared, as soon as possible, with one of the following—Pastor, Coordinator of Education Ministry, Volunteer Coordinator, or President of the congregation.
- D. If inappropriate behavior or policy violations are observed that warrant concern but do not involve abuse, as soon as possible notify one of the following—Pastor, Coordinator of Education Ministry, Volunteer Coordinator, or President of the congregation
- E. Misconduct by a rostered member of the ordained clergy or rostered lay person in this congregation shall be promptly reported to the office of the Bishop of the ELCA Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod, 202-822-1901.
- F. Please document what you have seen and to whom you have reported it. The Reporting and Responding Documentation Form (Appendix H) may be used to document details of abuse, suspected abuse, inappropriate behavior, or non-abuse policy violations. As soon as possible give a copy of any documentation to one of the following—Pastor, Coordinator of Education Ministry, Volunteer Coordinator, or President of the congregation.
- G. It is Good Shepherd's policy to report child abuse to the appropriate governmental authority, as required by state law and church regulations. Good Shepherd will cooperate fully with government authorities in the investigations of allegations of child abuse.
- H. Any concerned person can report suspicions of child abuse and neglect. Reports may be made confidentially or anonymously. Every state provides immunity from civil liability for persons who report suspected abuse in good faith and without malice. "In good faith" means that the person submitting the report believes what he or she is reporting to be true.

Responding

All persons involved in reporting or documenting any alleged incident of abuse should hold information in confidence, subject only to such disclosures as are required under church procedures and as necessary to facilitate investigation of allegations of abuse and resolution of the situation.

- I. The Child Protection Policy oversight group will maintain a confidential written record of each report of abuse received.
- J. The Child Protection Policy oversight group will determine a response which may include the alleged perpetrator being:
 - a. asked to meet with some or all of the Child Protection Policy oversight group to discuss the situation.
 - b. removed from any position involving contact with children at Good Shepherd until the allegation is resolved.
 - c. asked to refrain from activities involving contact with children for a specified period of time or indefinitely, depending on the nature of the behavior.
 - d. reported to Child Protective Services and/or the police.
 - e. required to have an assigned escort (designated member of the congregation) any time he or she is at Good Shepherd.
- K. The Pastor or Pastor's designee will be in contact with parents or guardians of alleged victims and those accused of allegations, as necessary, and will make proper reports to government and law enforcement authorities. If the Pastor is the perpetrator, the Coordinator of Education Ministry, Volunteer Coordinator, or President of the congregation will assume those responsibilities.
- L. If abuse occurs, a designated spokesperson for Good Shepherd, generally the Pastor, Pastor's designee or President of the congregation, will inform the congregation about the situation when

appropriate to do so (i.e., disclosure of the situation will not jeopardize the investigation or cause undue hardship to the victim and accused), protecting the identities of those involved as needed, to avoid rumors and the spread of false information.

Reporting Abuse—Summary of Who to Contact and What to Do

Immediate danger or Emergency situation

1. Call 911 to notify police of situation and request help.
2. Do what you can to make sure the child is safe.
3. As soon as possible, contact one of the following—Pastor, Coordinator of Education Ministry, Volunteer Coordinator, President of the congregation—to report what has occurred.
4. Document what was observed and reported. You can use the Reporting and Responding Documentation Form (Appendix H).
5. Give the documentation to one of the following—Pastor, Coordinator of Education Ministry, Volunteer Coordinator, President of the congregation—as soon as possible.

Suspected abuse or neglect

1. Call City of Alexandria Child Protective Services, 703-746-5800, to make a report
2. Do what you can to make sure the child is safe.
3. As soon as possible, contact one of the following—Pastor, Coordinator of Education Ministry, Volunteer Coordinator, President of the congregation—to report what has occurred.
4. Document what was observed and reported. You can use the Reporting and Responding Documentation Form (Appendix H).
5. Give the documentation to one of the following—Pastor, Coordinator of Education Ministry, Volunteer Coordinator, President of the congregation—as soon as possible.

Observe inappropriate behavior or policy violations that warrant concern but are not abuse

1. Call one of the following—Pastor, Coordinator of Education Ministry, Volunteer Coordinator, President of the congregation—to share your concern.
2. Document what was observed. You can use the Reporting and Responding Documentation Form (Appendix H).

3. Give the documentation to one of the following—Pastor, Coordinator of Education Ministry, Volunteer Coordinator, President of the congregation—as soon as possible.

Appendix A: Important Phone Numbers and Contact Information

To Report Abuse or Suspected Abuse

Police Emergency Phone Number: **911**

Police Non-Emergency 24-Hour Phone Number (City of Alexandria): **703-838-4444**

City of Alexandria Child Protective Services, 7 days a week, 24 hours a day: **703-746-5800**

Virginia State Hot Line to Report Child Abuse: **1-800-552-7096**

To Contact Church Staff or Officers

Pastor Jeanette Leisk: **703-548-8608**

Denise Steene, Coordinator of Education Ministry: **703-644-2215**

President of the congregation:

Volunteer Coordinator: **703-548-8608**

Bishop, ELCA Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod: **202-822-1901**

ChildHelp National Child Abuse Hotline

The Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline **1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)** is dedicated to the prevention of child abuse. Serving the United States, its territories, and Canada, the Hotline is staffed **24 hours a day, 7 days a week** with professional crisis counselors who, through interpreters, can provide assistance in 170 languages. The Hotline offers crisis intervention, information, literature, and referrals to thousands of emergency, social service, and support resources. **All calls are anonymous and confidential.**

Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Website

www.nsopr.gov.

Includes a national sex offender search feature.

State Criminal Records and Sex Offenders Registry Information

Virginia Agency

Virginia State Police, 7700 Midlophian Turnpike, Richmond, VA 23235
(804) 674-2000; www.virginiatrooper.org

Virginia Statutes on Reporting Child Abuse

State Child Abuse Reporting Statute Websites – Virginia, www.dss.state.va.us

Appendix B. What to Expect When Calling Child Protective Services (City of Alexandria) (modified from <http://alexandriava.gov/ChildAbuse>)

Child Protective Services (CPS) is established by the Code of Virginia (63.1-284.6) to receive and respond to concerns of abuse or neglect of children.

Any concerned resident who suspects that a child is abused or neglected should call **703-746-5800**, or the State Hot Line at **1-800-552-7096**.

You are free to call and discuss concerns anonymously. Please provide as much information as possible about your concerns and the identity of the child. (Appendix H can be filled out to help with details.)

If a child is in immediate danger, call 911 for police assistance.

Actions taken by CPS are regulated to provide families with respect and fairness. Decisions and service plans are subject to review by supervisors and by the court. Dispositions of investigations may be appealed by the alleged perpetrator of abuse.

What Should I Do When I Suspect Child Abuse or Neglect?

You can call **703-746-5800** - 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to report your suspicions.

Don't hesitate. When you report what you've seen or heard, you may help a child to stay safe. If you've noticed the warning signs of abuse and neglect, please call. If you don't report your suspicions, the abuse of a child might continue.

You should have a reasonable suspicion of the abuse, but you don't have to "prove" the abuse or be positive that it occurred. If you report in good faith, you are immune from civil or criminal liability.

Do I have to give my name?

No, but eyewitness accounts about the suspected abuse will help the professional staff handle each situation effectively. Usually the name of the person making the report will be known only if court testimony is involved.

After I report my suspicions, then what happens?

Child Protective Services (CPS) investigates the situation to determine the risks to a child. If a case is "founded" (the abuse is verified), then caseworkers will recommend an action plan to protect the child.

Will I be told what happens?

No. To protect everybody involved, confidentiality rules are strictly enforced.

Do you suspect child abuse or neglect?

Call 703-746-5800

Appendix C. Signs of Child Abuse

(Information taken from the City of Alexandria, Virginia, Child Protective Services web page, <http://alexandriava.gov/ChildAbuse>)

Identify at Risk Children! One step in helping abused or neglected children is to recognize the warning signs. Report any suspected physical abuse, medical neglect, mental abuse or sexual abuse inflicted upon a child by caretakers.

No one symptom alone proves child abuse, but when they appear often, or in combination with other symptoms, adults need to report them.

It may be physical abuse when you see a child with:

- Questionable burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, welts or black eyes.
- Fading bruises or other marks after an absence from school.

It may be physical abuse when the parent or other caregiver:

- Offers an unconvincing explanation for an injury.
- Describes the child as "bad" or "stupid."
- Uses harsh physical discipline.

It may be physical neglect when a child:

- Steals food or money from classmates, often seems hungry.
- Lacks medical or dental care.
- Says that no one is home to care for him.
- Lacks proper clothing for the weather.
- Often appears dirty or tired

It may be physical neglect when a parent or caregiver:

- Abuses alcohol or drugs.
- Appears indifferent to a child's needs.
- Seems apathetic or depressed.
- Consistently fails to keep important appointments or to take medicines.

It may be emotional abuse or neglect when the child:

- Displays self-destructive behavior, like cutting or burning himself.

- Becomes overly compliant and passive or extremely demanding and aggressive.
- Acts inappropriately adult-like (such as parenting other children) or inappropriately infantile (such as frequent rocking or head banging).
- Can't make or keep friends.

It may be emotional abuse or neglect when the caregiver:

- Constantly puts down or blames a child.
- Rejects the child outright.
- Makes unreasonable demands on the child without regard to his abilities or developmental level.
- Gets defensive or refuses to consider help for the child's school problems.

It may be sexual abuse when the child:

- Can't walk or sit easily.
- Has injuries or redness around the genitals.
- Displays unusual sexual knowledge or behavior, such as being seductive.
- Withdraws, seems depressed or can't get along with peers.
- Abuses drugs or alcohol.
- Has unexplained money or gifts.
- Expresses thoughts of suicide and low self-worth.

It may be sexual abuse when the parent or caregiver:

- Was sexually abused as a child himself.
- Abuses drugs or alcohol.
- Lacks social and emotional contacts outside his family.
- Restricts a child's contact with those of the opposite sex.

Following are some additional common signs of child sexual abuse that may warrant reporting:

Physical Signs:

Unusual lacerations and bruises,
 Difficulty with urination,
 Torn or bloody underclothing,

Venereal disease.

Behavioral Signs:

A sudden change in behavior,
Nervous or hostile behavior toward adults,
Avoiding a person or situation that the child would normally have been involved in,
Sexual self-consciousness,
“Acting out” of sexual behavior.

Verbal Signs:

“_____ does things to me when we're alone",
"I don't like to be alone with _____,"
“_____ fooled around with me,"
“_____ says mean things to me.”

For additional information, you can read “Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect: Signs and Symptoms” published by the Child Welfare Information Gateway and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, found online at <http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/signs.pdf>.

Appendix D. Child Protection Policy Acceptance Statement

Please read the copy of the *Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Child Protection Policy* provided to you. Please sign below to indicate that you have read and understood the Policy and agree to comply with the policies and procedures outlined therein when working with children.

I, (print name) _____, accept the responsibility to nurture the Christian faith and well-being of the children of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and to care for them as Christ cares for me. “Jesus said, “Whoever welcomes a child, welcomes me.” (Matthew 18:5). Children are our present and our future, our hope, our teachers, our inspiration. They are full participants in the life of the church and in the realm of God. Jesus also said, “If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea.” (Matthew 18:6).

I have read and understood the *Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Child Protection Policy* and accept it. I promise to exhibit appropriate behavior and conduct when working with children. I hereby affirm that I have not resigned from or been terminated from a position for reasons relating to abuse or misconduct, as defined in the Policy statement. I further affirm that I am not a registered sex offender nor do I have any pending or resolved cases with the civil authorities concerning the welfare of children. I affirm that I will not use my position of trust in the church to abuse or harm any child.

I HAVE READ and UNDERSTAND and AGREE TO ABIDE BY the Child Protection Policy of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

Signature

Date

Contact Information

NAME		
MAILING ADDRESS		
CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE
TELEPHONE # (Home) (Cell)	(Work)	
EMAIL ADDRESS		

Appendix E. Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Application to Work with Children

DATE of APPLICATION:

This application is a confidential part of a process to help the church provide a safe, nurturing environment for our children. Persons responsible for the supervision and care of our children are in a special position of trust and confidence. Therefore, persons seeking to work with children at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church are asked to complete this application.

PERSONAL INFORMATION (Please show photo identification when submitting form, e.g., driver's license)

NAME		
MAILING ADDRESS		
CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE
TELEPHONE # (Home) (Cell)	(Work)	
EMAIL ADDRESS		

1. How long have you been attending Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Alexandria, VA?
2. Are you 18 years or older? **No** **Yes**
3. Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offense? **No** **Yes**
4. Have you plead guilty or “no contest” to any criminal offense? **No** **Yes**
5. Have you ever been charged with or convicted of child neglect? **No** **Yes**
6. Have you ever been charged with or convicted of physical or sexual abuse of children or adults? **No** **Yes**
7. Have you plead guilty or “no contest” to any neglect or abuse offense? **No** **Yes**
8. Have any complaints or allegations of misconduct involving children ever been made against you? **No** **Yes**

If you answered “yes” to any of the questions 3 through 8, please explain, including in which state the conviction or charge occurred (use the back side of this application or a separate sheet of paper, as needed):

CHURCH OR YOUTH WORK EXPERIENCE

List previous work, paid or volunteer, involving young people. Please provide the organization and location, type of work, and approximate dates.

Please share your talents and strengths in working with young people.

PERSONAL REFERENCES

Please furnish personal references from churches, schools, community and civic organizations where past work with children was done, if there is no previous work with children, include other volunteer work or activities.

NAME

TELEPHONE

ADDRESS

Position of person named above:

Type of work done:

NAME

TELEPHONE

ADDRESS

Position of person named above:

Type of work done:

NAME

TELEPHONE

ADDRESS

Position of person named above:

Type of work done:

I understand that the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church may contact the references I have provided as part of the process of reviewing this application. I hereby release from any liability any person or organization that provides information. I certify that the information I have provided is true and correct.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE:

DATE:

Received by _____ Date _____

Appendix F.

BACKGROUND CHECK AUTHORIZATION FORM

I hereby authorize Lexis Nexis/ChoicePoint Services Inc.on behalf of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Alexandria, Virginia, to procure a consumer report which I understand may include the following information:

- Social Security identification
- County courthouse check
- Nationwide criminal check
- Driving record

Full Name _____

Social Security Number _____ Date of Birth _____

Current Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

E-mail _____

Current Congregation Name _____

City _____ State _____

Previous Addresses (including county of residence)

Signature _____ Date _____

BACKGROUND VERIFICATION DISCLOSURE

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church will obtain an investigative consumer report. The investigative consumer report may include information regarding your character, general reputation, personal characteristics or mode of living. The following Consumer Reporting Agency will be asked to prepare the report:

ChoicePoint Services Inc.
 1000 Alderman Dr.
 Alpharetta, GA 30005

Appendix G.

**Reference Check Form
CONFIDENTIAL**

APPLICANT NAME
REFERENCE CONTACTED
NAME OF PERSON CONTACTING THIS REFERENCE
METHOD OF CONTACT: telephone, letter, personal conversation

“Hello, my name is _____ and I am contacting you on behalf of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Alexandria, Virginia. (Name of applicant name) _____ applied to work with children at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, listed you as a reference, and gave us written permission to contact you. Would you please answer the following questions to the best of your ability? This should only take a few minutes and is very important to our church programs. Thank you.”

QUESTIONS:

- A. How long have you known the applicant?

- B. In what capacity?

- C. Based on your experience, would you say that the applicant would work well with children? Why or why not?
 - Prekindergarten

 - Grades K to 6:

 - Junior high:

 - Senior high:

- D. Would you entrust your child to this person?

- E. Are you aware of any problems that would affect his/her work with children?

- F. Are you aware of any allegations of child abuse?

- G. Any other comments?

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

Appendix H. Reporting and Responding Documentation Form p. 1

Name of person providing information:

Name of person recording information (if applicable):

Individual of concern:

Name of child involved:

Date and time of occurrence:

Type of concern:

- Inappropriate behavior with a child
- Non-abuse policy violation with a child
- Possible risk of abuse
- Suspected abuse
- Observed abuse
- Other concern:

Please describe the situation. Attach additional sheets as needed.

(a) What happened?

(b) Where did it happen?

(c) When did it happen?

(d) Who was involved?

(e) Who else was present?

(f) Did anyone else observe the behavior of concern?

(g) Was the parent of the child present?

(h) Did the parent observe the behavior of concern?

(i) What was the parent's reaction?

(j) If the parent was not present, do you know if the parent has been notified? Yes No

Reporting and Responding Documentation Form p. 2

Was the incident reported to the police or 911? Yes No

Was the incident reported to child protective services? Yes No

If reported to the police or child protective services, what was their response and recommended course of action?

Who from the church was contacted? Pastor Coordinator of Education Ministry
 Volunteer Coordinator President of the congregation Other (name _____)

To your knowledge, has this type of situation happened before? If so, please describe what you know.

If so, do you know what, if any, action was taken? Who was involved? Who was questioned?

Do you know if police or child protective services were called for the earlier situation? Yes No

Have you spoken to anyone else about this incident? Yes No If so, who?

Would you like someone to call you to discuss this situation?

I certify the above information is true to the best of my knowledge. If report was given verbally please have both the person providing the information and the person taking notes sign, if possible.

Signed:

Date:

Signed:

Date:

Reporting and Responding Documentation Form p. 3

For Office Use Only

Name of person being interviewed for this report:

Name of person recording information:

Date report was taken:

Questions below are to be answered by the person who received the reported information (p. 1 and 2)

To your knowledge, has this type of situation happened before? If so, please describe what you know.

If so, do you know what, if any, action was taken? Who was involved? Who was questioned?

Do you know if police or child protective services were called for the earlier situation? Yes No

What is the follow-up plan?

Does anyone else need to be notified?

Will the situation need monitoring?

Report taken and submitted by:

Telephone number:

Address:

I certify the above information to be true to the best of my knowledge.

Signed:

Adapted from: Model Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth—April 2004

Date:

Appendix I. Adult Participation and Expectations

Thanks for volunteering your time and energy to the Good Shepherd youth. If you have any questions about the event you are attending, please ask so we can clarify. We will provide as much information about the event as is available through emails and conversation. One of the main purposes of youth events is to provide an opportunity for caring adults to connect with youth and to build relationships that will last beyond the end of the event.

Expectations:

- o Complete child protection training.
- o Complete pages 1 and 2 of the Application to Work with Children
- o Sign the Child Protection Policy Acceptance Statement.
- o Complete an application for a background check if you will be staying overnight with the youth.
- o Attend any pre-event meetings, if scheduled.
- o Help with event preparations such as planning, shopping, etc.
- o Participate with the youth during the entire duration of the event or trip.
- o Be a triple-A adult—authentic, available, and affirming.
- o Try your best to meet and engage all youth equally.
- o Be on time to all scheduled meetings, happenings, etc.
- o Participate in all scheduled happenings. If you feel comfortable leading a prayer, devotion, etc., please do so.

Thank You! Have Fun!

Appendix J. Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Website Photo Opt-Out Form

I, _____, do not want my photo to appear on the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church website. I also do not want the photos of these family members to be used on the Good Shepherd Lutheran Church website:

I understand that all efforts will be made to ensure that these photos do not appear, though sometimes in group shots where it is hard to distinguish individuals, we may not be able to identify people well and choose to use a photo containing one of these individuals on the site. All efforts will be made to follow this directive. This photo opt-out form will remain in effect until a request is made to rescind this directive. If we have accidentally posted a photo including one of the individuals listed above, please contact the church office for removal of the photo. Please attach photos of the above-listed individuals to this sheet for identification purposes. These photos will not be released.

Print Name

Signature

Date