

# Child Safety Policy

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**Statement of Intent:** The intent of this policy is to safeguard our minor children and youth<sup>1</sup>, and those paid or volunteer adults who work with them. We view this policy as a demonstration of our commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all of our children and youth.

## Hiring and screening

All persons providing services or supervision to minors in the Chapel or on its grounds under the aegis of the Chapel must complete the following hiring /screening process.

1. A completed and signed application must be provided to the Chapel or Congregation offices.
2. A comprehensive background check including criminal history will be preformed on all staff and volunteers working with children. Permission forms outlining the background check requirements and the applicant's authorization must be completed and signed by the applicant and maintained in the Chapel or Congregation offices. Other background checks may be completed as warranted. Driving records may be checked for individuals who may transport children.
3. No person who has been a member of the Congregation for less than six months will be allowed to volunteer with children and minor youth, except that Duke University students and/or their spouses may submit acceptable character references in lieu of six months membership.
4. No "second chance" will be given to anyone who is known to have had accusations, situations, or charges of sexual misconduct or child abuse brought against them in the past.

## Safety procedures for Chapel building activities

### I. Definitions and Duties

- A. Protection Oversight Committee: The Protection Oversight Committee (POC) is comprised of the Dean of the Chapel, Chapel Director of Development and Administration, Senior Pastor of the Congregation, and one lay person chosen by the Congregation Council. The POC is responsible for the following:
  1. Hearing all reports regarding infractions of the policies and procedures listed herein;
  2. Periodically reviewing these policies and procedures, and recommending to the Chapel leadership such modifications as needed;
  3. If background records check warrants, interviewing prospective workers or volunteers regarding their background and/or verifying the candidate's appropriateness for the position desired.
- B. Ongoing Contacts: Ongoing Contacts are those adult workers (paid) or volunteers who have ongoing contact with youth or children in the Chapel. Ongoing Contacts include all ministers and staff, Sunday school (Godly Play) teachers for youth or children, regular nursery workers, and counselors for the youth. Ongoing Contacts will meet the following requirements:
  1. They will have been a member of Congregation at Duke Chapel for at least 6 months, or will have been employed by the Chapel or Congregation with criminal background checks completed, or will be Duke students and/or spouses with acceptable character references (see Hiring/screening #3).
  2. They will complete such forms as are needed for criminal records check.
- C. Event-based Contacts: Event-based Contacts are unpaid parents and volunteers who

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<sup>1</sup> Minor child/youth are younger than eighteen (18) years of age, with the exception that Duke University students are exempt from protection under this policy as they are covered under other University policies.

1. Assist one or more Ongoing Contacts with a specific event, whether it be Sunday school, a mission trip, a summer program, or any other Chapel or Congregation-sponsored event in which children and youth will participate, and
2. Are either adults, or senior youth who are at least five (5) years older than those children or youth they are helping to supervise, with the exception that Duke students who meet Hiring/screening criteria may be three (3) years older than those they are helping supervise.

D. Summer Youth Intern: A Summer Youth Intern is usually a Duke student who is a paid assistant to the Director of Youth Ministries. This person must meet the criteria set forth in this policy.

## II. Supervision of Minors

- A. There shall be at least one qualified Ongoing Contact supervising any Chapel or Congregation-sponsored activity for youth or children.
- B. Whenever possible, there shall be no fewer than two workers or volunteers supervising any group of children or youth.
  1. The two-supervisor rule shall apply to both classroom and non-classroom activities involving children or youth.
  2. It is preferable that these adults not be married to each other. If they are married, parental authorization is required (see Item IV).
  3. One supervisor may be a senior youth provided that the youth is at least (a) fourteen and (b) five years older than the children supervised.
  4. If the Summer Youth Intern is the only supervisor of an event, parental authorization is required (see Item IV).
- C. In the event that a child must be alone with only one supervisor, it is preferable that the supervisor be an Ongoing Contact. (For example, if a young child needs temporary assistance in the restroom, the Ongoing Contact will assist that child while the Event-Based contact/assistant remains with the other children.)
- D. All organizations that use the Chapel facilities or grounds for meetings or events involving children must meet all stipulations in this policy *except* that the supervisors need not have been a member of the Congregation at Duke Chapel or regular attendees at the Chapel. However, at least one supervising adult must meet all other requirements for an Ongoing Contact. See XII.
- E. A rotation of members of the POC, the Congregation's Director of Children's Ministry, and the appropriate members of the Congregation Council will make unannounced, frequent visits to all areas where infants, children, or youth are meeting during Sunday school, regularly scheduled worship services, Sunday evening youth activities/meetings, and child or youth activities on afternoons and evenings.
- F. Workers and volunteers should avoid physical contact with children or minors that could in any way be misconstrued as inappropriate.
- G. Corporal punishment of any kind is prohibited.

- H. There will be an immediate suspension of any worker or volunteer using physical threats or force to keep youth or children under control, except when reasonable force is necessary to secure safety in situations of eminent danger; in such situations, an Incident Report must be filed.
- I. Any verbal or non-verbal sexual behavior is prohibited.
- J. Verbal or non-verbal sexual behavior or gestures by a child or youth observed by staff or volunteers shall be reported to the Director of Children's Ministries, Assistant Pastor, or member of the POC.
- K. Dating by an adult of any member of the youth group is prohibited.
- L. The presence, possession, consumption of or being under the influence of any illegal drugs or alcohol by anyone supervising or transporting children is prohibited.
- M. All workers or volunteers must report any injury of a child or youth to an appropriate POC member immediately and complete an Incident Report within 24 hours of the injury.
- N. All workers or volunteers must report any child abuse or suspected child abuse to a designated POC member, and help complete the initial questions on the Report of Suspected Abuse.
  - 1. The form will then be entirely completed by the POC member with assistance/recommendations from law enforcement and child social services, as appropriate.
  - 2. This procedure is to be followed in addition to any legal obligation to report as required by North Carolina statutes.
- O. All classrooms and meeting places will have doors or walls where windows allow an unobstructed view into the room. Otherwise, the door of the room is to remain open as long as there is a child or youth in the room.
- P. Nursery workers and Sunday school teachers must be advised of emergency procedures to summon appropriate assistance during worship services and all other hours during which the nursery or a classroom is open.
- Q. Bullying by children of other children is not permitted in Duke Chapel and all supervisors/contacts of children will stop such behavior immediately and report it to all parents involved and to the POC.

### III. Exceptions and Exemptions for Supervision

- A. An individual adult may supervise a group of children or youth for a limited time under the following circumstances:
  - 1. The adult is a qualified Ongoing Contact;
  - 2. The room in which the event is held opens onto a common, trafficked area (room or hallway) that is in use simultaneous to the event in question;

1. Either the door to the room in question remains open, or the interior of the room is clearly visible via windows, to a common, trafficked area (room or hallway) that is in use simultaneous to the event in question; and
2. Coordinators for the event, if available, make frequent, random visitation to the room.

B. A married couple may supervise a group of children or youth, so long as

1. One of the adults is a qualified Ongoing Contact; and
2. All other criteria from Item III. A. are met.

C. The Summer Youth Intern:

1. Must qualify as an Ongoing Contact, except that he or she need not have been a member of the Congregation for six months prior to appointment.
2. May be allowed supervision of partial-day youth events, even though he or she may not be five years older than all youth supervised, provided he or she meets the criteria listed in Item III.A; and
3. Must be at least 21 years of age and meet all other requirements in order to act as driver for Congregation-sponsored events, as listed under "Transportation of Children and Youth".

IV. Advance Parental Notification and Consent

A. If it is likely that any of the guidelines for supervision of youth and minors within this policy will not be met on a particular occasion, parents must be given advance written notice and full information of the event, including the specific portion(s) of this policy that may not be in place on that occasion. Further, a parent/guardian must provide written consent for his/her child or youth to participate.

B. For partial-day youth activities that will happen off site, parents may sign a single permission slip for their minor to attend a series of these events. That permission slip will specify if there will be foreseeable times when youth will be with only one adult, such as when the Director of Youth Ministries will be only adult during transportation to an event. It is always preferable that there be at least two adults at the site of the event.

C. If a child or youth is delivered to the Chapel for an event which would normally require a permission slip, every reasonable effort will be made to contact that parent or guardian in order to either gain consent for the minor's participation, or to have a parent or guardian reclaim that minor if consent is not given. However, if a parent or guardian cannot be reached, and the only other option is to leave the minor unattended and unsupervised, then the minor will be allowed to join in the activity while reasonable attempts to notify a parent or guardian continue (See also VII. H).

V. Open Door Policy

Parents, volunteers, and staff of the Congregation or Chapel have the right to visit and observe any program for children at any time.

VI. Sign-In and Sign-Out Procedures

- A. Persons responsible for children taken to the nursery must sign their child in and indicate on that same form the person(s) responsible for picking up that child. No child will be released to an unauthorized person.
- B. It is likewise advisable to have a form on file that lists persons who may pick up a child in case of emergency.
- C. These authorization forms will be stored by the Congregation for a period of three (3) years.

VII. Trip and Retreat Supervision

- A. Any chaperone or adult accompanying children or youth who will be housed with those children or youth overnight must meet the criteria for an Ongoing Contact or Event Based Contact.
- B. There must be at least one adult of each gender present at co-ed overnight events; it is preferable that these adults not be married to each other.
- C. At single-gender overnight events, at least one of the two or more adults present will be of the same gender as the children/youth.
- D. It is preferable that two adults of the same gender be in each room or suite as the minors sleep. On the occasions where there are bedrooms rather than large dorm rooms.
- E. There will be "night monitor" who patrols halls and inspects rooms as necessary during overnight trips.
- F. A member of the POC shall review and approve sleeping arrangements for overnight trips.
- G. Permission slips, including permission for emergency medical care, shall be carried by the designated leader of each trip and/or retreat.
- H. Occasionally a youth will invite a friend to a partial-day activity that is held off site, and that friend will arrive unannounced and unanticipated for the event. In such a circumstance, the Ongoing Contact will make every reasonable effort to contact the parents of the youth prior to leaving. If the parent or guardian can not be reached, the Assistant Pastor will allow the friend to join the activity in lieu of leaving that minor alone and unsupervised. (See also IV. C. )

VIII. Transportation of Children and Youth

- A. The driver for any Chapel or Congregation-sponsored event must:
  - 1. Be known to the designated leader of the event;

2. Whenever possible be or be accompanied by at least one Ongoing Contact whenever transporting a children or youth;
3. Be at least 18 years old if driving a privately-owned vehicle;
4. Have written permission from parents/guardian/vehicle owner to drive for the event if the driver is a minor or is not the owner of the vehicle s/he is driving;
5. Have a valid state driver's license for the vehicle being operated;
6. Have proof of insurance;
7. Have an operational cellular phone in the vehicle;
8. Be accompanied by at least two children or youth unless parental consent is obtained (see Section III); and
9. Have read and signed the Driver Information Sheet (attached) indicating that the policy has been read and will be followed.

B. Urgent Transportation: In instances where a youth or child is without transportation to or from an event, a youth counselor may transport the child or youth provided that child or youth's guardian has been contacted and verbal permission given to the driver for the transportation.

C. Emergency Transportation: Under extreme circumstances, such as traumatic injury to a child, an Ongoing Contact may transport a child or youth to the hospital, a trauma center, or similar emergency care facility without the prior consent of a parent or guardian. Every reasonable effort will be made to contact the parent or guardian as soon as possible.

IX. Special rules for Supervision of Specific Activities

A. Youth counseling: In instances of youth counseling where circumstances dictate that counseling is most effective on a one-on-one basis, a Congregation staff person or volunteer may meet individually with a child or youth in a room adjoining an occupied room, closing the door only so long as the room is visible through an unobstructed window.

B. Dismissal from Group Events: For group events, it may be inevitable that one child or youth's transportation from the event arrives late. In this circumstance, it is preferable that more than one staff or volunteer remain with the child or youth until transportation arrives.

X. Reporting Procedures for Accident or Injury

A. In order to assure proper attention was given to an injury or accident, the appropriate adult supervisor must complete an Incident Report (see form attached) within twenty-four hours of the incident whenever a child or youth is injured.

B. The completed Incident Report should be routed by Congregation office staff to an appropriate member of the POC within that same twenty-four hour period.

C. Incident Reports must be kept on file indefinitely.

XI. Reporting Procedures for Suspected Abuse

- A. Appropriate adult supervisor or witness to the event must complete Section One of a Report of Suspected Abuse within twenty-four hours of the incident.
- B. The supervisor or witness above should then direct the Report of Suspected Abuse to an appropriate member of the POC within that same twenty-four hour period.
- C. The Protection Oversight Committee will then:
  1. Immediately notify the proper authorities (e.g. the Department of Social Services, local law enforcement, etc.) This is a requirement of the laws of North Carolina.
  2. Determine, with the help of the proper authorities above, how and when to notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) and take whatever steps are necessary to assure the safety of the child or youth until the parent(s), guardian(s), or authorities arrive.
  3. Remove the accused from any immediate involvement with children and/or youth.
  4. Take any allegations seriously and reach out to the victim and family as much as possible, remembering that care and safety of the victim is the first priority.
  5. In cases of Chapel or Congregation-related abuse allegations, report the incident to Duke Risk Management, the Congregation's president, the Congregation's insurance company, the Congregation's Senior Pastor and the Dean of the Chapel.
  6. Complete a written report to be kept on file to ensure on-going ministry to, and advocacy for, the victim(s) and others involved. This report must be completed in pen or typed, and a copy of it sent to Duke Risk Management.
  7. Only after the proper authorities have been contacted and the safety of the child or youth is secured, the pastor or other designated person may tell the accused that the report has been made.
  8. If the accused is an employee of the Congregation, the Staff-Parish Committee should be notified within twenty-four (24) hours of the reporting of the event in order to temporarily relieve the accused of his or her duties until the investigation is completed. If the accused is a paid staff person of the Congregation, arrangements must be made to either maintain or suspend his or her income until the allegations are cleared or substantiated. Based on all circumstances and investigative findings, the Dean of the Chapel, Senior Pastor of the Congregation and Staff-Parish Relations will together decide whether to reinstate the accused in his or her former position.

9. Any contact with the media must be handled by the Chapel's Manager of Communications in concert with Duke News in coordination with the Congregation's attorney and Duke Risk Management. Care will be taken to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.

- XII. Outside or independent children's groups using the building are responsible for the safety of their children; however,
  - A. See II.D -- All organizations that use the Chapel facilities or grounds for meetings or events involving children must meet all stipulations in this policy *except* that the supervisors need not have been a member of the Congregation at Duke Chapel or regular attendees at the Chapel. However, at least one supervising adult must meet all other requirements for an Ongoing Contact.
  - B. The Special Events Coordinator or Administrative Coordinator of Chapel Music or other appropriate party will give a copy of this policy to the group before the building use or cooperative agreement is confirmed.
  - C. The chief administrator or the board chair of the group will sign a document expressing the group's agreement with the principles set forth in this policy and affirming the group's intention and capability of following the principles and standards set forth in this policy.
  - D. If such group has its own child safety policy, a copy of that must be submitted with rental or cooperative agreement, and the POC may permit the group to substitute its own policy and procedures for procedures set forth in this policy.
  - E. In all cases, the invitation or rental agreement shall contain a clause holding Duke University and Duke University Chapel and its employees and volunteers harmless from any legal action resulting from any non-compliance with this policy.