

**Safe in Our Care:
Policies and Procedures
For a Safe Church**



First Presbyterian Church of Snohomish
1306 Lakeview Drive
Snohomish, WA 98290

360-568-6498
office@snopres.org
www.snopres.org

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Introduction

“Jesus called the children to him and said [to his disciples], ‘Let the children come to me and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these’ ”. Luke 18:16



Following the example of Jesus, our church congregation seeks to extend a welcoming invitation to those in our community who may wish to meet Jesus. We seek to plant seeds of love and trust that will someday blossom into wholehearted responsiveness to God. Just as Jesus warned his disciples not to stop or impede the children, so we take seriously the need to minimize known impediments to the trust and safety of persons in our care. This guide sets forth safeguards and operating procedures meant to foster a community of safety, trust, loving acceptance, and responsible oversight. It is our aim to provide a balanced set of safeguards that protects all persons involved in ministry from unnecessary harm or unwarranted suspicion. Revisions to this policy are overseen by the Nurture Committee of the Session.

I. Safety for Personnel



The people who carry out the ministry of this church, whether as paid staff or as volunteers, are held to a high standard of accountability for their interactions with others. This is reflected in our policies for the selection, supervision, and retention of persons working with children and youth.

A. Selection of Personnel

1. Selection of paid Staff: Paid staff members are under the supervision of the personnel committee. Their policies for selection of paid staff are in a separate document and may be reviewed by request at any time.
2. Selection of Volunteer Staff: The following pertains to volunteers whose involvement in the Snohomish First Presbyterian Church is deemed to be at a level or duration that the Nurture committee or Pastors feel an assessment is needed. Volunteers (defined as any person not a member of the paid staff, **minimum age 16 and up**, who holds a position in the instruction and/or care of children and youth), are selected through a process that involves personnel:
 - All current federal and state laws are referenced and utilized in the selection process followed for volunteers.
 - Reference checks will be used for screening purposes for applicants 16 or 17 years of age, with parental consent.
 - a volunteer is required to fill out a Trusted Employees background check authorization request form. (See Document 1)
 - a volunteer is required to complete a national background check with a Volunteer Package or Volunteer Driving Package through Trusted Employees/Church Mutual, our insurance company. The level of background check required is determined by the responsibilities of the volunteer position.
 - a volunteer will receive and read a copy of the “Safe in Our Care” document.

- If the above materials are received and the applicant’s background check, references, and agreement to uphold the “Safe in Our Care” policies raise no concerns; the volunteer may be placed on a team. **Any prospective volunteer who is currently under investigation for, or has ever been arrested, charged, or convicted of any offenses involving children or youth,” or has a record of offense, with children or youth, documented by the criminal identification process, will be excluded from serving in any capacity with children and youth, without exception.**

B. Supervision of Personnel

Persons who are placed on a ministry team benefit from several levels of supervision.

1. Training events take place approximately once a year. All staff and volunteers who hold a position working with children and youth should participate in any training which reviews the “Safe in Our Care” document for prevention and recognition of child abuse. A signed agreement to read and follow our “Safe In Our Care” policies (see document 2) and a Washington state Patrol check will be kept on file in the main office.
2. The team approach means that staff and volunteers work together to assure safety of children and youth and offer mutual support in classroom management.

C. Returning Personnel

Retaining highly committed, trained teachers enhances our level of safety preparedness and is an asset to our program. No teacher will be retained whose application indicates a change in criminal history or readiness to abide by the “Safe in Our Care” practices.

AUTHORIZATION AND REQUEST FOR CRIMINAL RECORDS VERIFICATION AND FINGERPRINT INFORMATION

I, _____, hereby authorize _____ to obtain and/or request information about my criminal history and fingerprints from any entity chosen specifically for conducting this search, to release information regarding any record of charges or convictions contained in its files, or in any criminal file maintained on me, whether said file is a local, state, or national file, and including but not limited to accusations and convictions for crimes committed against minors, to the fullest extent permitted by city, county, state, and federal law. I do release said entities from all liability that may result from any such disclosure made in response to this request. I may revoke this request at any time, but that revocation must be in writing and give 30 days' notice of same.

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

| | | |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|
| Name (Last) | (First) | (Middle) |
| Address | City | State ZIP Code |
| Other names used by applicant (if any): | | |
| Date of Birth | Place of Birth | Social Security Number |
| Driver's License No. | Issuing State | License expiration date |

Email: _____

Phone: _____

CHURCH MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY AND HERMES SARGENT BATES WISH TO POINT OUT THAT NO WARRANTY ATTACHES TO THESE DOCUMENTS, AND IN FACT, THESE DOCUMENTS MAY NOT BE APPROPRIATE FOR THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF A PARTICULAR ENTITY. THESE DOCUMENTS ARE NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR GOOD PRACTICE, PROPER SUPERVISION, AND DILIGENT OVERSIGHT AND CONTROL. THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT THESE DOCUMENTS WILL PROTECT ANY FACILITY THAT CHOOSES TO USE THEM. BEFORE USING THESE DOCUMENTS OR ANY SIMILAR DOCUMENTS, YOU SHOULD CONSULT WITH YOUR OWN ATTORNEY TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT THE DOCUMENT YOU EVENTUALLY USE IS CORRECT AND CURRENT UNDER THE LAW OF YOUR PARTICULAR JURISDICTION AND THAT THE DOCUMENT MEETS YOUR NEEDS FOR YOUR PARTICULAR SITUATION.

Document 2

Safe In Our Care

I agree to read and follow the policies and procedures documented in the “Safe in Our Care Policies and Procedures For a Safe Church” booklet.

Printed Name:

Signature:

Date:

II. Safety for Personnel Working with Children and Youth

- A. At least two adults should be present with children and youth. In the event that only one teacher is available due to illness or other circumstance, a window or open door will be used for easy visibility. When one teacher must leave a classroom to assist a child, a “buddy system” can be applied by one adult accompanying two children or two adults accompanying one child. (Think 1 + 2 or 2 + 1, but always three.) The goal of this policy is that children and youth will not be alone, out of easy visibility, with one adult.
- B. All rooms have windows in the doors so that activities are in plain view from the hallway. Any room temporarily utilized as a meeting space that does not have a windowed door should have the door remain fully open during the session.
- C. Physical expressions from adults towards children, youth, and other adults require discretion and sensitivity, since innocent actions can be misinterpreted. Babies need to be held, young children need to be comforted and affirmed, and teens need acceptance. Children in infancy and preschool years (0-5 yrs.) may be cared for in the lap of a caregiver. Once in first grade (6 yrs.), children should not sit in the laps of adults. All of these may at times involve appropriate forms of touching, such as holding and rocking infants or placing an arm briefly around the shoulder of a discouraged person. **Discretion, sensitivity, and age appropriateness are of paramount importance.**

Activities which might be especially prone to mis-interpretation include tickling, wrestling, roughhousing, and personal grooming. Leaders must never misuse their authority or power to exploit a trust relationship to gain advantage over another for personal pleasure, whether through force or subtle persuasion. When in doubt, err on the side of caution so that no action might be misinterpreted as sexually gratifying to you, a child, or any other party present.

- D. We teach and practice cooperation and respect for all children, youth and adults. Verbal communication should, in tone and content, communicate this respect, avoiding such things as belittling

comments, yelling, or demeaning language. Adults should also avoid giving immoderate, focused attention (i.e. frequent visits, long phone conversations, e-mails, texts, gifts) or compliments to a particular child or young person.

- E. Volunteers and paid staff who work with children and youth should follow the “five years older” rule: they should be at least five years older than the oldest participant in the program they serve. Student interns between the ages of 18-23 shall be accepted, but only when they function under the supervision of at least two other adults. **Five year rule.**
- F. Any reasonable suspicion of sexual misconduct or abuse occurring during a church-sponsored activity will be reported as outlined in the “Procedure for Handling Suspected Child Abuse” (See Document 3). A reasonable suspicion is a belief or opinion based on information or circumstances sufficient for a prudent person to take appropriate action. Any staff member or volunteer suspected of sexual misconduct or abuse will be relieved of their involvement in ministry to children and youth, until and unless the appropriate investigating parties agree there is no evidence of abuse and the response team agrees to reinstate that staff member or volunteer.
- G. When anyone working with children and youth believes there is reasonable suspicion of child abuse having occurred *outside of* First Presbyterian Church of Snohomish. (FPC), such as bruising without appropriate explanation, spontaneous report of abuse from a child, etc. (See list of child abuse indicators in Document 4), the person must immediately contact the, Director of Children and Youth Ministries (DYCM), or a member of the pastoral staff, who will take appropriate action.



Document 3

PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING SUSPECTED ABUSE

There are several ways in which concerns or allegations of abuse may come to light.

- A child or youth may share something with an adult
- A caregiver/teacher may raise a concern because of an observation with a child or parent
- A caregiver/teacher may raise a concern about another caregiver/teacher
- A parent may raise a concern about a caregiver/teacher

The following protocol should be followed by anyone involved in ministry at First Presbyterian Church of Snohomish or by members of any organization or group using facilities of the church in **all cases** of suspected abuse, i.e. cases occurring within our congregation and cases occurring outside of our care:

1. When anyone working with children or youth believes there is reasonable suspicion of abuse (see Document 4, Child Abuse Indicators) the person must immediately contact a member of the permanent church staff (pastors, DCE), who will take appropriate action.
2. The staff member will discuss the situation with the person who suspects the abuse. If both agree that there is reasonable suspicion of abuse, or if after discussion one individual remains convinced that there is reasonable suspicion of abuse, then **reporting becomes mandatory**.
3. Although the division of Child Protective Services (CPS) will accept anonymous reports, we believe that the overall goal of protection of the vulnerable person who might have been victimized, and the mobilization of resources to aid the family and community, will be best achieved by direct communication with CPS revealing our identity and position, and notification of the family of our report. An exception to open reporting shall be made whenever, in the discretion of the reporter, such a report would expose the child or youth to greater danger. All those involved should be treated with care and respect throughout the reporting interaction. Any decision to report will call for the formation of a response team to include the pastor, the Clerk of Session, and other specialized team members they may designate.
4. Reporting must be done at once by calling Child Protective Services (1-800-562-5624). In the event that the office cannot respond, or doesn't answer, the report must be made to the local police department by dialing 911 and requesting that the officer on duty assist in the reporting of a suspected case of abuse.
5. Child Protective Services or the local police authority will provide the structure of the report by asking questions. The person filing the report will fulfill the guidelines for reporting as stated in Washington State Law RCW 26,44.040 by simply and factually answering those questions.
6. If the suspected abuse occurred during a church sponsored event, the Clerk of Session will be the only person authorized to speak to media or make statements on behalf of the church, or the Clerk of Session will designate a single spokesperson with this authorization.

7. Staff must objectively document every step taken in response to the initial report until the conclusion of the process.
8. If reporting becomes necessary, follow the protocol and allow the process to work. Do not gossip or share your concerns with others. Information should be shared on a strictly “need to know” basis. The goal of this interaction is to provide help and healing, not to cause further injury.
9. We as a church body recognize that abuse is a sin that is not less amenable to the grace of God for forgiveness and healing than any other. We do accept the responsibility entrusted to us to protect the health and welfare of children and youth within our care and realize that the responsibility may necessitate difficult and painful interactions within the congregation when abuse occurs. We also recognize our own limitations as professional and lay staff and agree that both children and adults involved in child abuse should be referred to appropriate counselors. Pastoral care should be maintained by the pastoral staff **{unless the Pastoral staff is suspected – Session designee}**

If You Believe You Have Observed Abuse

1. Stay calm. It doesn't help anyone to become angry, panic, or exaggerate the situation.
2. Steady yourself with prayer for yourself, the potential victim and his/her family.
3. Contact the permanent staff member as early as possible.
4. Be ready to provide the permanent staff member with the child's full name, parents' names, and phone number.
5. Classroom teachers will need to fill out an Incident Report form to document their concerns.

If you are approached by a person who feels they may have suffered abuse:

1. **Sit facing the individual. Avoid making any physical contact.**
2. **Be ready to listen**
3. **Don't label feelings for the person speaking or ask leading questions.**
4. **Avoid a display of shock or anger.**
5. **Assure the person that you have heard their concern and will try to help.**
6. **Say, “I'll go with you if you want to tell”.**
7. **Assure a potential victim that they are not alone, they can get help, and the problem can be handled constructively.**
8. **Approach a permanent staff member with the concern immediately.**
9. **Utilize extreme care to protect the privacy of the alleged victim and the person accused of misconduct. Pastoral care and sensitive communication will be provided to all parties, including the reporter.**

Notes regarding State laws:

Section 26.44.030. of the Washington State Penal Code requires that professional school personnel, health practitioners, registered nurses, psychologists, pharmacists, certified childcare providers and social service counselors who have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse, file a report with the appropriate agency at the first opportunity to do so and not later than 48 hours after discovery. Recent litigation (State v. Motherwell, 114 WA. 2nd 353, 788P.2d.1066) suggests that church staff and volunteers fit most closely under

the category of social service counselors and are therefore subject to these requirements. If this is daunting to you, be aware that the state of Washington recognizes the special vulnerability of children and youth in society and therefore provides protection from prosecution for respondents who may erroneously report abuse but who have done so in good faith and without malicious intent.

Document 4

Child Abuse Indicators

These are *clusters* of indicators that point to abuse or neglect. Not all children or youth who have one or more of these indicators have been abused.

PHYSICAL ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Physical Indicators

- Unexplained bruises, burns, fractures, or abrasions, often in various stages of healing.
- Marks that look like human hands, or bites
- Consistent lack of supervision
- Consistent hunger, inappropriate dress, poor hygiene, or unattended medical needs

Behavioral Indicators

- Self-destructive behavior
- Extremes of aggression or withdrawal
- Moves with discomfort and shies away from physical contact
- Wears excessive clothing to conceal bodily injury
- Reports that no caretaker is at home when under age 12
- Fatigue and listlessness
- Steals or begs for food

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Physical Indicators

- Delayed physical development
- Speech disorders
- Substance abuse

Behavioral Indicators

Developmental delays
Withdrawn, depressed, or listless
Inability to trust adults or peers
Passive or aggressive behavioral extremes

SEXUAL ABUSE

Physical Indicators

Torn, stained, or bloody underwear
Irritation of the mouth, genital, or anal area
Venereal diseases or frequent infections
Difficulty sitting or walking

Behavioral Indicators

Inappropriate sex play, acting out, seductiveness, promiscuity
Sudden changes in self-worth, school work, or appetite
Excessive clinging, fear of being left alone, or impaired trust
Withdrawal, depression, or hysteria
Suicide, runaway, attempts

III. Safety in the Facility

- A. The church facility is maintained by the Building and Grounds Committee. Any potential danger, or any hazard posed by broken or damaged material or equipment, should be reported immediately to the committee elder moderator or a member of the permanent staff.
- B. All paid staff are offered First Aid and CPR/Defibrillator training. First Aid kits are available in the workroom office, nursery, and downstairs kitchen. A backpack First Aid Kit is maintained in the office. (**workroom**) It is recommended that this kit be taken on any outing away from the facility. When treating any wound, treat all blood as infectious and wear disposable gloves.
- C. Should a minor injury occur in the facility, an accident report form (See Document 5) will be provided to the parent at pick-up time to inform them of the first aid action taken, if any.
- D. Should a potentially serious injury occur in the facility, paid staff and volunteers will contact the child's parents and/or arrange for emergency treatment as per the signed statement on all church registration and permission slips (See Document 6).
- E. In the event of severe weather, church activities will be canceled on any day that the Snohomish School District cancels classes due to weather. No staff member, volunteer, or participant should travel under any conditions deemed hazardous for the sake of a church activity. If in doubt, please call the church office for clarification or remain at home.
- F. Smoke detectors and fire alarms are placed throughout the building and fire extinguishers are maintained in the upstairs kitchen. An emergency defibrillator is located on the wall outside the church library
- G. In the event of a fire, or any circumstance requiring evacuation, follow these guidelines: Evacuate your children or youth by the route marked in your classroom evacuation plan, located on the back of every classroom door. Designate a specific adult to call 911 and report back to you when it has been accomplished. If safe

and practical, it's recommended to call 911 from a church phone to allow for responder locating the church. Take your class roster with you. Close the door behind you. Alert any classroom on your exit route of the need to evacuate. Assist children in crawling below the smoke level in case of extreme smoke. All classes will use the front lawn sign as a gathering place. Once outside, do a headcount and report your class's status to the staff member or any fire personnel handling the fire. Stay with your class and follow all instructions until the emergency is over and children and youth can return to their families. In the case of the nursery, attendants with more than two non-walkers in their care should use the wagon provided to wheel them safely out of the building.

- H. Sick policy: Childcare rooms and classrooms are “well child rooms”. If a parent has any reason to believe a child or youth is ill or is becoming ill, he or she should not bring the child to the church activity. Specific signs of illness that indicate your child should not participate include: any fever within the last 24 hours; diarrhea or vomiting within the last 24 hours, excessive coughing, **green mucous** known contagious conditions such as chicken pox or pink eye. To protect the health of our families and volunteers, a child with these symptoms may, at the discretion of the leaders, be asked to remain with the parent.
- I. Diaper Changing Protocol (Nursery 0-2 yrs): All diapers will be changed in plain view from the hallway and the top section of the door should always be open. Place the child's diaper bag next to the changing table. Put on rubber gloves. Place a fresh disposable changing pad under the infant. Clean child with wipes. Dispose of used wipes, diaper, changing pad and place in the receptacle provided. (Launder coverings on changing pad, when needed.) Spray down and wipe off the changing pad with disinfectant and paper towels, if soiled.) Remove and dispose of gloves. Wash hands thoroughly.
- J. Restroom Policy:
 - 1. Toddlers (24-36 mos) Diapers will be changed in plain view using the diaper changing protocol. Children no longer in diapers may use the in-room bathroom with the door open. Provide assistance *as requested and initiated by the child*.

2. Preschool (3-5 years) Children will be escorted to the bathroom by an adult and a child of the same gender. The adult will enter first. The children will then use the restroom while the adult waits in the open, outer area. Children in this age group generally need minimal assistance, but the adult may help *as requested by the child*.
3. Elementary – 1st - 6th grade - Children in these grades typically do not need assistance and may be dismissed from class to use the bathroom. If children request accompaniment, the teacher should follow the same procedure as described for preschool children.

K. Dismissal from Classes/events: Children are to be released to parent or approved caregiver only as specified in registration or check-in materials.

Document 5

Accident Report Form
(Please print all information)

Date of Accident: _____ Time of Accident: _____ a.m. /p.m.

Name of child/youth injured: _____

Address of child/youth: _____

Location of accident: _____

Parent or guardian: _____

Name of person(s) who witnessed the accident:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Description of Accident: _____

Action Taken, if any: _____

Please turn in to DCE or other permanent staff member at the end of the event.
Maintain copies in file in Church Office under "Accident Reporting".

V. Safety Away from the Facility and Overnight Events in the Church

- A. All outings away from the facility and overnight events in the church should be cleared by the DCE, DYM, or Pastoral staff and placed on the church calendar. A flyer with all needed information and a permission slip should be prepared and given to the church secretary to allow him/her to answer questions regarding the activity.
- B. Informational flyers should include the following information:
Name of activity
Date of activity
Specific place and time to meet
Specific place and time to pick up
Cost of activity (what event includes)
Name of contact person and number where he/she may be reached
- C. Permission slips should be obtained with a parent's signature. Copies should be made and carried with the leader of the event, with the originals remaining on file in the office. For standard permission slip form (See Document 6). To insure proper communication and collection of required permission slips, it is recommended that informational flyers and permission slips be sent, **or posted online**, a minimum of TWO WEEKS prior to the scheduled event.
- D. It is recommended that there be two adults from FPC in attendance at outside or overnight activities. Student interns ages 18-23 who are working with youth are not counted as one of these adults for the purposes of this policy. The preferred ratio of adults to elementary children in activities away from the facility is 1:5.
- E. In events taking place in public spaces, always use the buddy system so that one participant is never alone, out of easy visibility, with one adult. One adult can accompany two or more children or youth, or two non-related adults "**recommended**" can accompany one child/youth. Think 1+2 or 2 + 1 but always at least 3. In events taking place in private residences, two adults must be present with any group of children or youth. Student interns not meeting the "five year older rule" shall not be counted as an adult.

- F. Drivers (minimum age of 25) must provide a copy of their driver's license and proof of insurance before transporting children or youth. (Note: Operators of buses and some passenger vans may require additional commercial licensing. Check local requirements.) These documents will be filed in the main office. A statement that the driver has consumed no alcohol, illegal drugs, or prescription drugs known to cause drowsiness or other impairment within the last 24 hours should be signed by each driver prior to leaving the parking lot. (See Safe Driver's checklist: Document 7) A driver may carry no more passengers than their vehicle's stated capacity and must have a properly operating seatbelt for each passenger. A relief driver should be provided for rotation every four hours.
- G. Continue to observe discretion and sensitivity regarding physical contact with children and youth. Innocent behavior can be misinterpreted. The most universally accepted good touching spot is the shoulder.
- H. On outings with children where it is necessary to use public restroom facilities, an adult should check the restroom area for strangers before the child enters, and remain in the outer restroom doorway until the child is finished.
- I. On overnight trips or in-church overnight events where it is considered necessary for adults to share sleeping accommodations with children or youth, males and females must sleep in divided sleeping accommodations. A minimum of two (non-related) adults of the same gender shall be present with each group.
- J. In order to insure proper insurance coverage and to clarify church sponsorship, any publicized class activity where the entire class is invited and teachers are representatives of FPC must be cleared in advance with the appropriate office (DCE, DYM, or Pastoral Staff) and a signed permission slip obtained from all participants.



Document 6

First Presbyterian Church of Snohomish Sample Permission Slip

Make your own flyer including the information listed and attach the permission slip; completed originals go in church office file under "Permission Slips-Completed"; copy goes with leader to the event. {each driver or leader should have a copy of all signed slips}

What: The Event

When: Date, Time starting and ending

Where: Location of event, specific drop off and pick up locations **{need to prevent one on one}**

Who: Who is involved, leaders

Cost: What is included

Contacts: For questions and during event

Transportation: How you are getting there

First Presbyterian Church of Snohomish Permission Slip

_____ (student's name) has my permission to attend the
_____ (event name) on _____ (date) given by _____
(sponsoring group) at _____ (location).

In the event of a medical emergency, I understand every reasonable effort will be made to contact me. If I cannot be immediately reached, I give permission for my child or youth to receive emergency treatment at the discretion of the event staff and volunteer leaders. I further agree that I will not hold First Presbyterian Church, the North Puget Sound Presbytery, their agents or employees, responsible for any accident or injury.

Signature of parent or guardian

Date

Print name of parent or guardian

Address of parent or guardian

Emergency phone during event

Home phone

Child's birthday
(MM/DD/YYYY)

Insurance name/group number

Document 7

Safe Driver's Checklist

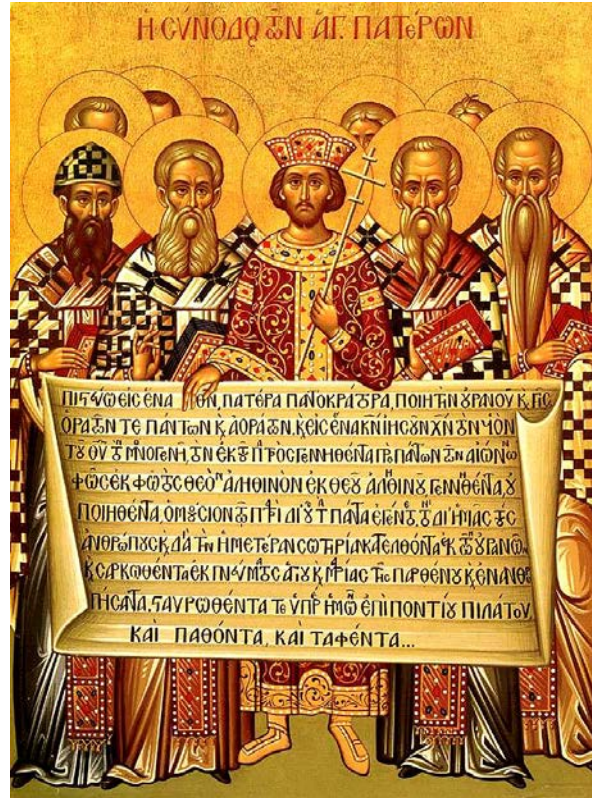
- _____ I have a current, valid driver's license. (Please provide copy)
- _____ I am in compliance with any restrictions on my license (e.g. glasses)
- _____ I have working seatbelts for every passenger
- _____ I am 25 years of age or older
- _____ I hold insurance on the car I will be driving, with liability, uninsured and underinsured coverage. (Please provide copy)
- _____ I certify that I have not consumed alcohol within the last 24 hours and am not taking any drug, prescription or otherwise, that might impair my ability to operate a motor vehicle.
- _____ I have a copy of the route and of the participants' permission slips. The route and original permission slips have been filed with the church office.

I certify that the above information is accurate and complete:

Name _____ Date _____

Please attach copies of license and insurance. File in Church office under "Drivers' Statements".

V. Appendix: Additional Documents/Information



A. Children's Ministry Registration

Please fill out one form per family, found on the "Forms and Registration" page of our website:
www.snopre.org

Child/Youth Name: Age: Birth Date: Grade: School: Allergies/ Medical

| | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

(Please use back to note helpful hints about caring for your child(ren); likes, dislikes, etc.)

Address: _____ City/Zip: _____

Parents(s) Name(s): _____

E-mail Address(es): _____

Phone for: Dad – Home: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____

Phone for: Mom – Home: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____

The following people are authorized to pick up my child(ren)

Emergency Contact: _____ Relationship: _____

Home: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____

Parent(s) Church Affiliation (if applicable): _____

Check box if your child's unnamed picture may appear on the church's website or newsletter.

Note anyone NOT authorized to pick up or have contact with your child(ren)? _____

In the event of a medical emergency, I understand every reasonable effort will be made to contact me. If I cannot be immediately reached, I give permission for my child or youth to receive emergency treatment at the discretion of the FPCS staff and volunteer leaders. I further agree that I will not hold First Presbyterian Church, the North Puget Sound Presbytery, their agents or employees responsible for any accident or injury.

Medical Insurance Name/Group #: _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian: Date: Print name of Parent or Guardian:

I received the "Safe in Our Care Parent Guidelines" on _____ (date) _____ (initials)

B. Parent Brochure

First Presbyterian Church of Snohomish Safe in Our Care Parent Guidelines

Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of Heaven.” Matthew 19:14.

Welcome to the Nursery! The mission of our Nursery is to provide a clean, safe and nurturing environment for our children. We believe that Jesus called his followers to love children and give them a place of honor in our church community. The Nursery is open to children from the ages of 0 to 2.

The Nursery is staffed with at least two attendants who are trained in First Aid and CPR. Children under their care will be provided with age appropriate activities and experiences. The attendants have been trained using specific guidelines to follow when working with children. We hope that your experience with the Nursery will be the beginning of a wonderful relationship with First Presbyterian Church of Snohomish. Thank you for allowing us to care for your child.

Please familiarize yourself with the following:

1. The Nursery is available 10 minutes prior to a church activity.
2. Each of you is asked to fill out a registration form. We need the requested information to do our best when supervising your child. We will keep this form confidential and on file in the Nursery.
3. Please label the items that a child brings to the Nursery.
4. **Sick policy:** Childcare rooms and classrooms are “well- child rooms.” If a parent has any reason to believe a child or youth is ill or is becoming ill, he or she should not bring the child to the church activity. Specific signs of illness that indicate your child should not participate include: any fever within the last 24 hours; diarrhea or vomiting within the last 24 hours; excessive coughing unless in the case of allergy; green mucous known contagious conditions such as chicken pox or pink eye; any rash that is communicable or unexplained; any communicable childhood disease such as whooping cough, measles, mumps; bronchitis; pneumonia; use of antibiotics for less than 24 hours; conditions such as impetigo, boils or untreated ringworms.

5. **Medications:** It is the policy of FPCS not to administer either prescription or non-prescription medications to the children under our care. Exceptions to the medications policy may be granted to parents of children with potentially life-threatening conditions such as asthma or severe allergic reactions.

6. **Discipline:** The safety of all of the children in the Nursery or classroom must be maintained. Inappropriate behaviors such as throwing, hitting, biting, pushing, hair pulling, scratching or kicking will be addressed. If children express this behavior they will be gently reminded of the appropriate behavior expected and they will be removed from the source of the conflict. This behavior will be discussed with the parent/guardian when the child is picked up from the Nursery.

7. **Picking up a Child:** For the safety of your child we will only release the child to the parent, guardian or individual specified on the registration form.

8. **Communication:** Please let us know if you need assistance with anything relating to the care of the children in our nursery. We want to provide the best care we can for our children.

Contact: _____ **or**

_____.

Thank you for your support!

C. Suggestions for Handling Behavior Issues

The teacher's attitude is a priority when disciplining. Be genuine, showing sincerity to the child. Just as God accepts us unconditionally, so you are to love and accept children. Have a positive attitude toward them, making positive comments on their behavior. Always be in control of your temper and tone of voice. Pray for yourself and the children.

Discipline is an act of love. The outcome of discipline should not be anger but an attitude of learning and correction of the behavior so that the child benefits.

Establishing a Plan of Correction:

1. Establish rules and procedures. Post these and remind the children of the expectations. Let the children understand that they are responsible for their actions.
2. Provide positive reinforcement for those who pay attention to the rules and procedures.
3. Wait for cooperation before beginning an activity or a lesson. Teach and share when you have the attention of the group.
4. Use the child's name when speaking to him or her.
5. Move to the area of a behavior problem while continuing the lesson or activity. Use proximity to deter unwanted behaviors.
6. Deal with the child individually. Do not scold a child in front of classmates. Identify the problem, ask for solutions and discuss alternatives. Be sure to keep the focus on what they are doing and how they need to change the behavior.
7. Respond to the misbehavior with clarity and firmness. Firmness means communicating an "I mean it" attitude. "I cannot let you—" carries more weight than "Please don't—"
8. Ask the child to describe their actions. They may not be able to articulate why they misbehaved, but should be able to describe what they did. If two children were involved, then get both sides.
9. Redirect the child into positive behavior. Once they have been corrected, allow them to rejoin the group.

10. A “time out” may be appropriate. Be sure to talk with the child to work out ways to prevent this from happening again.
11. Allow the child to experience the consequences of misbehavior. This may mean having them clean up the mess they made or having them apologize to the offended person.
12. If all else fails speak to the Director of Children’s Ministries or a member of the Nurture Council. A pastoral conference can also be arranged.

D. Nursery Attendant

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of Heaven." Matthew 19:14.

General Job Description:

The mission of this position is to create a welcoming, safe, nurturing environment for children so that they want to come to church and to the nursery. We believe that Jesus called his followers to love children and give them a place of honor in our community. Creating a clean, safe, and nurturing environment for children in our nursery helps to honor them and welcome them.

As a child care provider, she or he will need to model kindness, compassion, and concern in interactions with children. She or he will be expected to model values such as sharing, non-violence and thankfulness. Children learn to know and trust God when they experience church as a safe and welcoming place.

The attendant will be the primary contact with the parents and will communicate through actions and words the purpose of providing a safe learning environment so that children might be nurtured into being followers of Jesus Christ.

Job Requirements:

1. To work as part of a team of employees and volunteers.
2. Be certified in First Aid and CPR.
3. Attend a training that covers SAFE IN OUR CARE with a trained staff member.
4. Read, understand and follow nursery policies.
5. Insure that the personal use of cell phones, either text or talk, does not occur while on duty.
6. Have a smile in your heart and on your face when you are with the children and parents. We always want our nursery to be an uplifting place to be.

Specific Job Description:

1. To arrive 15 minutes prior to nursery opening.
2. To check to see that the nursery is well stocked with supplies.
3. To provide a safe and loving environment for all children in the nursery.
4. Insure that no child is left alone in the Nursery under any circumstance.
5. To provide for efficient check-in of children keeping accurate record of the child's name, parents name and any special requirements for each child in the nursery.
6. To provide parents with a Child Registration Form and a Nursery Parent Guidelines brochure.
7. To introduce her/himself to the parent and child. It is expected that the Nursery Attendant will be near the door to the room so contact may be quick.
8. To label each child's belongings
9. To keep an accurate and up to date record of the number of children in the nursery during each church school, worship service or other church event.
10. To keep all information about the children in the program and their families confidential.
11. To provide a routine for organized play and experiences in the Nursery.
12. To actively participate with the children. The environment will be much more positive and happy when you are actively involved with the children.
13. To provide positive verbal discipline, guidance and correction when needed to foster a safe, trusting and nurturing environment.

14. Be responsible for the general neatness and cleanliness of the Nursery. Change linens and place soiled linens in the provided laundry bag. Toys and materials must be cleaned/ sanitized after each use. Broken/damaged items need to be disposed of.
15. Attendants must follow general hand washing guidelines for safety following potty time, each diaper change or after cleaning any bodily discharge, such as wiping noses.
16. To promptly inform the nursery coordinator of any nursery issues, complaints or needs; including any needed repairs to facilities or equipment.
17. To keep track of hours worked and submit to the nursery coordinator.
18. To give as much advance notice as possible to the nursery coordinator when not able to be present.

Support:

1. First Aid and CPR training will be provided to the Nursery Attendant.
2. Materials and forms will be provided for your use.
3. Each Nursery Attendant will attend a performance review twice a year. The Personnel Committee will annually review the adequacy of compensation.
4. All required training opportunities will be provided for the attendant.
5. The following people are available during services and church events if questions or situations arise that you are not able or authorized to address. Please contact them immediately.

| Name: | Phone Number: |
|----------|---------------|
| 1. _____ | _____ |
| 2. _____ | _____ |
| 3. _____ | _____ |
| 4. _____ | _____ |

I have read, understand and agree to adhere to the Policies and Procedures set forth in this document.

Name

Date

E. NURSERY and ACTIVITY TIME COORDINATOR

A Volunteer Position

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of Heaven." Matthew 19:14

General Job Description:

This individual ensures the children's programs for ages 0 to 5 are secure, nurturing environments where each child will hear and feel the love of Jesus Christ and parents can feel confident their child will receive the highest quality of care and ministry.

Job Requirements:

1. Work as part of a team of employees and volunteers.
2. Be certified in First Aid and CPR.
3. Attend a training that covers SAFE IN OUR CARE with a trained staff member.
4. Oversee the care, maintenance, cleanliness, security and safety of the nursery and Godly Play areas.
5. Assist in the development of the policies practiced in the nursery and Activity Time ministries. (I.e. sick children, discipline, etc.)
6. Post and assist in the enforcement of these policies. Be an active participant in all required volunteer and staff training sessions.
7. Develop and communicate the schedule for appropriate staffing for the nursery and Activity Time based upon needs for Sunday services and additional activities throughout the week.
8. Schedule substitute attendants for the nursery or Activity Time programs when the regularly scheduled attendant is unable to be present. On occasion the coordinator may have to substitute in the vacant position.
9. Maintain an adequate inventory of supplies: snacks, drinks, wipes, cups, etc. and ensure that the rooms are well stocked at all times.

10. Strive to motivate caregivers to perform their jobs at the highest level of quality.
11. Demonstrate a positive and friendly attitude with staff, parents and the children who are in our care.
12. Concerns and issues will be reported to the Director of Youth and Children's Ministries and the Nurture Council.

F. Suggestions for the Care of Infants

All activities for children will be developmentally and age appropriate. The children should be involved in these activities and participatory games for the largest percentage of time that they are in the nursery. It is our goal for the children to have a pleasant visit in the nursery, and to achieve this, the workers should interact with the children as they play and talk with them.

1. Infants are in the earliest stage of development, and in order to foster this development, infants should not be restricted to one area (piece of equipment) or activity for long periods of time.
2. Do not stand and hold more than one infant at a time. It is a much better solution to place them on a mat on the floor and join them.
3. Infants need to be held while given bottles. When warming baby bottles, use the bottle warmer, or simply heat with warm tap water. These procedures will ensure even warming and will preserve the nutrients of the milk of our breast-feeding moms.
4. Diapers need to be checked hourly and soiled diapers need to be changed immediately.
5. When placing babies in the cribs, they are to be placed on their backs (unless instructed otherwise by the child's parent).
6. The nursery should be a very clean room for the safety of both the children and the workers.
7. All equipment and surfaces must be cleaned. All toys used must be cleaned. Sheets must be changed after use by each child. Carpet spills must be cleaned immediately.
8. Workers should not eat or drink in the carpeted areas of the nursery especially in front of the children.
9. Workers must follow general hand-washing guidelines. Workers should wash their hands after each diaper change or cleaning any bodily discharge, such as wiping noses.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Diaper-Changing Surfaces



A 2007 outbreak of shigellosis in Florida affecting 46 children was associated with multiple child-care facilities. The most important risk factor for illness was having a diaper changed.

A 2010 E. coli outbreak at a Vancouver, Washington daycare led to the death of a four-year-old boy and four hospitalizations. Investigators believe risky diapering procedures may have been a factor.

Public Health Reasons

Dirty diapers containing fecal matter can be the source of pathogens that cause gastrointestinal illness. Children in child-care centers commonly excrete intestinal pathogens even if not presenting symptoms. For example, noroviruses can be shed in the feces of children for at least 25 days after symptoms have stopped. Similarly, rotavirus can be shed for 25-57 days after the onset of diarrhea in a child. Continued shedding of pathogens in the feces of asymptomatic children can increase the transmission to healthy individuals.

Surfaces and fomites play an important role in the spread of pathogens. During diaper changing, the diaper-changing pad or the diaper-changing table may come into contact with dirty diapers and fecal matter. Many pathogens can survive for long periods of time on environmental surfaces. For example, noroviruses can survive up to 42 days at room temperature when dried onto a surface. When child-care providers and children come in contact with contaminated diaper-changing surfaces, pathogens may be transmitted from the surfaces to their hands or clothes, and then they may spread pathogens to other children and the child-care environment. In a study by Jiang et al., a person with clean hands touched a contaminated ball, then touched a clean ball, and passed it down a line of people. The hands of the first three of five participants tested positive for the contaminant.

It is important to clean and disinfect surfaces in and around the diaper-changing area because classroom objects in close proximity to diaper-changing areas can become contaminated, making them a source of gastrointestinal pathogens. Both sanitizers and disinfectants are products regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). However, there are some differences in the two. Disinfectants are used on hard inanimate surfaces and objects to destroy or irreversibly inactivate infectious fungi, viruses, and bacteria, but not necessarily their spores. Sanitizers are used to reduce, but not necessarily eliminate, bacteria from the inanimate environment to levels considered safe as determined by public health codes or regulations. When cleaning diaper-changing areas, it is important to use a disinfectant.

Practices

Clean and disinfect *all* surfaces in the diaper-changing area every time a diaper is changed.

Cleaning

- Clean any visible soil from the changing surface using a reusable cloth or a paper towel dipped in warm water and a detergent.
- Rinse surfaces with warm to hot water to remove cleaning products and suspended debris.

Disinfecting

- Wet the entire changing surface with a disinfectant that is appropriate for the surface material you are treating. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for use.
- Let the solution stand for the contact time given on the label. Make sure there is enough disinfecting solution on the surface that it does not dry up before the recommended contact time ends.
- Be sure to get disinfectant on all areas of the changing table and other surfaces in the diaper-changing area.
- Let surfaces air dry before using.

Recommended Disinfectants

See EPA list of registered products effective against noroviruses. Follow product labels for use and dilution:

- Ethyl or isopropyl alcohol (70-90%)
- Sodium hypochlorite (5.25-6.15% household bleach diluted 1:10)
- Phenolic germicidal detergent solution
- Iodophor germicidal detergent solution

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Authors and Acknowledgements

AUTHORS: Cortney Miller, MS, Angela Fraser, PhD, Roman Sturgis, MFA (editor), Xi Chen, MS, Anna Saunders. Department of Food, Nutrition, and Packaging Sciences, Clemson University, Clemson, SC 29634

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VI. Revision History

Revised 7/2009 to clarify that overnight events in the church fall under the same guidelines for events away from the facility. Mark Johnson, Nurture.

Revised 9/2011 to clarify when volunteer assessment is needed, to change caregiver training to approximately once a year from twice a year, to add page numbers and revision level, deleted facility statement, added other causes for a possible evacuation and added suggestion to call 911 from church phone (as opposed to a cell phone). Mark Johnson, Nurture.

Revised 10/2015 to re-organize booklet, changing format and placing pertaining documents within each section. Included an Appendix with support documents for staff. Dede Babcock and Linda Mueller.