

**Midway United Methodist Church
Douglasville, Georgia**

Children, Youth & Vulnerable Adult

**Safety Policy
And
Procedures Manual**

Table of Contents

	Page
Statement of Purpose	3
Ongoing Supervision of the Child Safety Policies	5
Worker Selection and Supervision	6
Guidelines and Policies	9
Response and Reporting Procedures - For Serious Incidents—Child or Youth Maltreatment	11
Appendix A:	
Children and Youth Ministry Guideline and Policy	
Nursery	18
Children & Youth Sunday School	20
Vacation Bible School	22
Children’s Church	24
Youth	26
Youth & Children’s Choir	30
Occasional Children’s Program	34
Preschool and Mother’s Day Out	37
Appendix B:	
Personnel File Checklist	41
Children’s and Youth Ministry Application	42
Guidelines for Interviewing Applicants	47
Children’s and Youth Worker Reference Form	49
Children’s and Youth Worker Authorization for Criminal/Court Records Check	50
Auto Safety Form	52
Appendix C:	
Trip Planning Sheet	54
Permission/Waiver Form	56
Incident Reports for Suspected Child Abuse and Accidents	60
Appendix D:	
Confirmation Letter for your Church’s Insurance Carrier	62
Letter or Announcement to Congregation Announcing Child Safety Policies	63

Statement of Purpose

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

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." John 10:11

As a church, we believe that the spiritual, emotional, and physical well being of children and youth is vital. This policy is intended to ensure that church activities involving children and youth are consistent with the teachings and example of our Lord Jesus Christ. The primary purpose of this policy is to promote the safety and well being of children and youth by providing clear instructions about the operation of the children's and youth ministries at Midway UMC. The leaders of Midway UMC ask the cooperation of the adults in our church who must abide by the stringent guidelines of this policy.

Child and Youth Safety Takes Priority

The greatest priority of Midway United Methodist Church children's and youth programs is to nurture kids through the Gospel and ministry of Jesus Christ. It is obvious that any sexual exploitation, abuse or endangerment directly contradicts this priority and the values of Midway UMC.

Workers and supervisors who oversee children and youth workers must keep this priority in mind: adults do not have a right to serve as workers. Adults merely have an opportunity to serve when selected by the church. This means that workers should err on the side of caution as they make subjective decisions involving the well being of children and youth.

A Higher Standard

As ambassadors of Jesus Christ, we must strive to be worthy of a very high standard of trust. For this reason, every worker at Midway UMC must avoid even the appearance of inappropriate behavior. All workers must diligently avoid any conduct that appears wrong to an observer, even if no actual misconduct takes place.

Commented [SH1]: Took out reasonable

Policy Standards and General Christian Moral Standards

Workers in children's and youth ministry are expected to observe these policies and guidelines as well as Christian standards of moral behavior.

Supervision of Children and Youth Workers

Church staff and volunteers who supervise children and youth workers are charged with the diligent enforcement of these policies. Violation of these policies may be grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or re-assignment from children's or youth work for both volunteers and staff, at the discretion of the church.

Supervisors and all children and youth workers who suspect any unhealthy or abusive activities must discuss their suspicions promptly with the youth pastor or senior pastor.

Touching Policy

We live in an age where child abuse is a reality in our society. The church should deal with this issue as a "good shepherd" by taking steps to protect the children and youth in our care. The touching policy of Midway UMC will help safeguard our children and youth while promoting a positive, nurturing environment for ministry to them. The guidelines below are to be carefully followed by anyone working with children and youth.

1. Hugging, kisses and other forms of appropriate physical affection between workers and children are important for a child's development and are generally suitable in our church setting.
2. Physical affection should be appropriate to the age of the child or youth. (For example, it is generally appropriate for a four-year-old to sit in a nursery worker's lap and give a kiss on the cheek, but it is not appropriate for a teenager and youth leader to behave this way.)
3. Touching should be initiated by the child or youth. It should be a response to the child's need for comforting, encouragement, or affection. It should not be based upon the adult's emotional need.
4. Touching and affection should only be given when in the presence of other children's ministry or youth workers. It is much less likely that touches will be inappropriate or misconstrued as such when two adult workers are present and the touching is open to observation. This rule is especially important when diapering a baby or helping a young child change clothes or use the restroom.
5. Touching behavior should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. As Ministry workers, our behavior must foster trust at all times; it **must** be above reproach.
6. A child's preference not to be touched should be respected. Do not force affection upon a reluctant child.
7. Church workers must strive to protect children under their supervision from inappropriate touching by others.
8. Church workers must promptly discuss inappropriate touching or other questionable behavior by other workers with their ministry leader or a pastor.

Commented [SH2]: should to must

Ongoing Supervision of the Child Safety Policies

The Senior Pastor will appoint the staff person or staff persons (the Staff Supervisors) with the responsibility for oversight of the Child Safety Policies. These policies shall govern all church activities that involve custody of children and teens less than 18 years of age.

Annual Review of Safety Policy

Each leader of a children or youth ministry will review compliance with safety policies and potential risks annually by submitting a checklist report that will be given to the Staff Supervisor. The report **must** include:

- A brief checklist of policy violations and the leader's response to these violations
- Any patterns of violations that suggest a policy change may be needed should be identified.

The Staff Supervisor will summarize reports received from individual children and youth ministry leaders and submit an overall report annually at the Charge Conference.

Waiver of Policies

Church policies may be waived occasionally for exceptional circumstances. The goal of Midway United Methodist Church is to promote safety while maintaining practical flexibility in children's and youth ministry. The Senior Pastor will be the only person authorized to approve policy waivers.

Modification of Policies

The Church Council in consultation with the Safe Sanctuaries committee must approve any changes in these policies. These policies may be modified or withdrawn by Midway United Methodist Church at any time. These policies shall not be interpreted as creating an implied or express contract with any person. They also shall not be interpreted as **creating** a legally enforceable or binding promise or representation.

Activities Covered by These Policies

All activities of Midway United Methodist Church that require church workers or volunteers acting within the scope of their duties to have custody of persons less than 18 years of age shall follow these policies. Midway United Methodist Church interprets the above guidelines to mean that the following activities of the church must begin immediate implementation of these policies: Nursery, Youth and Children's Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Preschool, Children and Youth Choirs, Midway Christian Academy, Mother's Morning Out, After School Program and Camps, Children's Church, Acolytes or any other children and youth programs affiliated with our church.

These policies do not apply to outside groups using the church's facilities. All outside groups using Midway United Methodist Church who will have children or youth present shall be solely responsible for administration, enforcement, and oversight of their safety plan.

Commented [SH3]: should to must

Commented [SH4]: changed from interpreting to shall not be interpreted

Worker Selection and Supervision

Classification of Workers According to Their Duties

In order to screen workers appropriately to their responsibilities, Midway United Methodist Church will divide workers into two categories: primary and secondary. Please note that the terms primary and secondary do not refer to the ages of children or youth served, but rather to relative levels of responsibility and risk.

- **Primary workers** -- All paid staff and volunteers in roles with greater responsibility or risk shall be classified as primary workers and will be required to meet primary screening standards. Primary workers have greater interaction with and access to children or youth and more opportunity to harm them, so we must take extra care in their screening.
- **Secondary workers** -- Secondary workers are people who occasionally interact with minors and/or do so in less risky circumstances. For example, a volunteer who sees children or youth only in a group setting, on church premises and with a program or ministry leader present may be classified as a secondary worker. This category may include parents of participants who supervise activities.

The following guidelines will be used as Midway United Methodist Church reviews applicants for positions in our youth and children's ministries:

Minimum Age

All workers must be 18 years of age or older. Younger persons may assist adults, but they may not take the place of adult workers.

Confidential Interviews

All applicants must be interviewed for suitability for the work they desire to do. Interviews will be conducted by the leader of the program in which the applicant will work or by other persons designated by the program leader. A team of interviewers may be used. Church policy and guidelines should be discussed during the interview. (See sample guideline for interviewing in Appendix B)

Six - Month Rule

Applicants must have been a member of Midway United Methodist Church or a regular attendee of the church for at least six months. This time of interaction between ministry leaders and the applicant allows leaders to better evaluate the suitability of an applicant for children's or youth ministry work. In some situations this rule is not feasible and may be waived by the senior pastor (such as church employees who are not church members). If the six-month rule is waived, program leaders may take additional steps to screen the applicant at their own discretion.

Application Forms

Applicants must complete and sign an application and the related waivers giving permission to check references and background information. (See sample in Appendix B)

Survivors of Child Abuse

Any applicant who is a survivor of childhood sexual or physical abuse needs the love and acceptance of the Midway United Methodist Church family. A person's experience with abuse and their recovery process may be pertinent to their suitability as ministry workers. Applicants who are survivors of abuse should discuss this in confidence with the person who conducts the confidential interview. If an applicant is uncomfortable doing so, they may have the interview conducted by a pastor.

When evaluating candidates, the following factors will be considered if an applicant is a survivor of child abuse:

- whether the applicant has previously committed an act of child abuse or molestation (anyone who has maltreated children may not serve in children's or youth ministry)
- the extent of professional counseling the applicant has received
- the opinion of references, especially professional counselors who have served the applicant
- the opinion of leaders in other churches or youth organizations in which the applicant has been involved
- how closely the church is able to supervise and monitor the position for which the applicant is applying.

Criminal Background Check

A criminal background check is required for primary worker positions and optional for secondary worker applicants at the discretion of the ministry or program leader in which they will work. (See release authorization form in Appendix B)

References

Church leaders will check at least two references for a secondary worker and three references are for a primary worker. The reference checks may be done by phone, mail, or in person. Whenever possible, the references should include: one person who has known the applicant well for an extended period of time, a former supervisor, and a member of the applicant's immediate family. (See reference form in Appendix B)

Auto Safety

At the request of the ministry program leader persons who will drive vehicles for conducting church business or transporting children on a regular basis must complete an "Auto Safety" form. This form is not necessary for a person who will not transport children or youth or who provides transportation only on a one-time or occasional basis. (See auto safety certification form in Appendix B)

First Aid Training

Church employees who supervise children and young people must maintain current certification in basic first aid and basic CPR (or their equivalent if other is offered in the church's locality). The church will pay costs for this training. Employees will be paid for attending training. New employees are to obtain this certification within 90 days of the start of their employment. Nursery workers and others serving young children may also request training in infant and toddler CPR. Other workers are encouraged, but not

required, to get training if they frequently accompany kids on adventure activities: water sports, camping, home-building mission trips, etc.

Signatures on Guidelines

All applicants must agree by signature that they understand the policies pertaining to their positions and that they agree to abide by them. This requirement will be met by having applicants sign the printed "Guideline" forms that are appropriate to their position. Staff members or volunteers who work with several ministry areas should sign the appropriate form for each ministry area. (See Appendix A for the various children and youth program guideline forms)

Confidentiality of Information

The church will keep confidential all information received in the applicant selection process. Selection information will be marked as such and stored with limited access afforded only to the staff supervisor, the senior pastor. SPRC will initiate criminal background checks and checks of the child abuse registry. The information which is obtained will be highly confidential. The SPRC Chairperson and Senior Pastor will have access to this information and other persons when absolutely necessary.

Delays in Receiving Information

While the church is waiting for background information and references, applicants may begin working in contact with children and youth. During this time only closely supervised work should be done by the applicant. Failure to receive satisfactory responses in a timely manner may result in dismissal or withdrawal of the offer to work with the children's or youth ministry program.

Screening Requirements for Primary and Secondary Workers

	Primary	Secondary
Six-Month Rule (waived for Employees and interns)	Yes	Yes
Application Form	Yes	Yes
Records Request Authorization	Yes	Optional
References	3	2
Confidential Interview	In-depth	Brief
Criminal/Court Records Background Check	Yes	Optional
Child Abuse Registry	Yes	Optional
Auto Safety Form	Yes*	Yes*
Guidelines (signed) and Job Description	Yes	Yes*

**Only if regularly operating a vehicle for church activities.*

Guidelines and Policies

Six - Month Rule – All children and youth program volunteers must be members or regular attendees of Midway United Methodist Church for at least six months before becoming children or youth workers (except compensated employees).

Completion of Application -- All children and youth program workers must complete and sign an application form.

Release Authorization Form – All children and youth program leaders must complete and sign a Release Authorization form.

References -- After gaining the applicant's permission, church leaders will contact references. Persons asked for references may be suggested by applicants or selected by church leaders. The church may contact employers, former ministers, and persons who have supervised applicants in church work previously.

Interview –Children and youth program leaders must be interviewed by a church representative to determine their suitability for children’s and youth group work. Information from this interview will not be released to unauthorized persons.

Background Check and a Social Services Registry -- After gaining the applicant's permission, church leaders will conduct a criminal background check and a Social Services registry check for applicants: this is mandatory for primary positions and suggested for secondary positions.

Commented [SH5]: added Social Services to paragraph

Auto Safety Form -- All individuals working with children’s and youth programs who will be regularly driving children or conducting other church business must complete and sign an Auto Safety form.

Commented [SH6]: took out " if requested by the ministry program leader "

Signed Agreement to Follow Guidelines – All children and youth program leaders must sign the agreement to these guidelines to show their commitment to observe these guidelines.

Two-Adult Rule -- Whenever possible a youth will not be in the primary care of one adult. At least two unrelated adults who have been approved for children’s and youth work will be present during all children’s and youth programs and activities. For field trips and church activities held offsite at least one adult worker should be the same gender as the children on this activity.

Commented [SH7]: changed feasible to possible

Roamers— With the approval of the senior pastor, for onsite programs and activities the use of assigned adult “roamers” who move in and out of rooms can be used to meet the two adult requirements. These roamers must be primary workers and meet the minimum primary worker screening standards.

Overnight Activities -- At least two adults will supervise overnight activities. If the participants are male and female, then male and female chaperons must be present. If these conditions cannot be met, then the event should be postponed.

Transportation To and From Meetings -- Transportation to and from meetings is not part of church or youth group activities. Parents are responsible for providing or arranging

for this transportation. Parents are discouraged from asking church workers to transport children or youth. However, if a church worker does transport a child at the parent's request, this should be recognized as informal contact (not a part of church activities).

Transportation as a Part of Church Programs -- The church may from time to time provide transportation as an official part of church activities. For example, the church may provide transportation to out-of-town events or field trips. When children are transported as a part of church activities, all guidelines will apply. Following the two-adult rule and having all drivers complete an auto safety certification form are especially important.

Reporting – Children and youth activity workers must report to a pastor, staff supervisor, or ministry leader if a minor threatens to harm himself or others, or discusses committing a crime, or past or current abuse. Workers must report suspected or observed misconduct by other workers to the children/ youth program leader, or senior pastor immediately.

Youth Supervising Youth -- Minors may help adults lead children's or youth activities only under the direct leadership of adults. A minor may not be used to meet the two-adult guidelines discussed above.

Corporal Punishment -- Corporal punishment (hitting or spanking) and other forms of punishment involving physical pain are not appropriate in Midway United Methodist Church activities. This rule holds true even if parents have suggested, or given permission for, corporal punishment. Children or youth workers must consult their supervisors or a minister if they need help with misbehaving youth or discipline techniques.

Open Door Policy – All children or youth events must be open door. This means that workers, parents, and church members have a right to observe any youth activity.

Commented [SH8]: should to must

Commented [SH9]: should changed to must

Dating or Sexual Involvement -- No youth program worker (adult) is to date a youth or be romantically or sexually involved with a youth. Any adult with prior incidents of sexual misconduct may not be a youth worker or serve in any capacity of youth ministry at Midway United Methodist Church. There are no exceptions to this guideline.

Supervision and Communication – Children and youth program workers should meet on a regular basis with the children or youth program leader and the program leader should meet with the senior pastor periodically to discuss any issues regarding these guidelines. Appropriate topics for discussion include problems, accountability, policy clarification, personal feelings, or other issues that may interfere with children or youth ministry efforts.

Workers must avoid even the appearance of misconduct. This is necessary in order to maintain parental confidence and avoid mistaken allegations.

Workers who disobey or fail to abide by these policies and guidelines may be reassigned or relieved from children's and youth program duty at the discretion of church leaders.

Response and Reporting Procedures for Serious Incidents—Child or Youth Maltreatment

(Including abuse, neglect, or sexual misconduct, which is observed, reported, or suspected).

Reporting is a scary prospect for anyone. If you are the supervisor or church leader and you become aware of alleged or actual abuse, take a moment to clear your head and think before you act. As you respond, remain calm. Take action in a manner that is assertive, effective, and sensitive to those around you.

These guidelines apply to allegations related to church workers or activities. As a church worker you may also hear about or suspect abuse that is not related to church workers or church activities. These policies are appropriate for either case.

It is recommended that at least the following steps be taken:

- Respond promptly and take all allegations seriously.
- Note the pertinent details of the allegation as soon as possible in writing.
- Identify witnesses at the scene (if any) and make a written record of:
 - Names (at least two, more may be helpful)
 - Where/how to contact
 - Brief account of what happened according to each individual witness
- Do not try to investigate or verify the allegations. That job belongs to law enforcement and child protection professionals who have the training needed.
- Confirm the immediate safety of all involved. If the immediate safety of the child is at issue, the worker must use his or her own judgment to decide the best way to proceed. You may contact law enforcement directly if timing is critical and church leaders are unavailable for consultation.
- Contact an appropriate church leader as soon as possible. A church leader will consult with you regarding reporting the allegation to the authorities. If you and the leader determine a report is needed, the church leader will help you in this process.
- Do not discuss the incident with anyone except those who have a need to know and are helping to respond.

General Principles

When responding to allegations of abuse, the church and its representatives will keep several key principles in mind:

1. Reports **must** be taken seriously.

Commented [SH10]: changed from "Follow these steps unless your best judgment suggests otherwise "

Commented [SH11]: changed from should to must

2. Allegations should be handled with sensitivity for people's privacy and confidentiality.
3. The church should cooperate with law enforcement and social services.
4. The victim should not be blamed.
5. The church should seek to provide support as appropriate for alleged victims, alleged offenders, and their families during this period of great stress.
6. The insurance carrier should be contacted as soon as possible.

Reports of questionable behavior must be taken seriously.

They should not be ignored or allowed to circulate without concern for the integrity and reputation of the accuser, the accused, and the church.

Allegations may occur in a variety of ways.

Since the church cannot control how a report will surface, it is important that officers, employees, and volunteers follow the steps described in this policy. These steps will ensure that the allegation is channeled to the appropriate person and that the problem is not compounded by an improper response.

Non-church related allegations must be taken seriously.

Young people frequently choose to confide in church youth workers about abuse happening outside of the church. It is important that reports of this type are also handled sensitively and appropriately. The church's policies also apply to reported allegations not related to church activities or workers. These policies are appropriate for allegations involving church activities and non-church related reports of abuse.

When a Victim Reports Abuse

The person hearing the initial report **must** follow these steps:

- Listen supportively.
- Hear the victim out -- do not minimize or discount the allegation.
- Do not judge the allegation negatively or positively.
- Ask basic questions to clarify facts if needed, but do not try to investigate or verify the allegations of the report.
- Note the pertinent details in writing as soon as possible after hearing the report, but don't take notes when the victim is speaking. Give him or her your full attention.
- Contact the program leader, youth pastor, or senior pastor immediately. The leader or pastor will help decide on the next step, consult with legal counsel, and make the report to law enforcement if necessary.
- If the senior pastor is being accused, the person receiving the initial report should contact the Chairperson of the Church Council Committee or the Staff-Parish Relations Chairperson.
- Do not discuss the allegation with anyone except those who have a need to know and are helping to respond.

Commented [SH12]: changed from should to must (Are there others that need to be done?)

- If the safety of the child is at issue, the worker must use his or her own judgment to decide the best way to proceed. Children and youth workers may contact law enforcement directly if timing is critical and church leaders are unavailable for consultation.

Police (770) 942-321
Sheriff's Department (770) 942-2121
Child Protective Service (770) 489-3000

Church Workers Who Observe Questionable Activities or Suspicious Behavior

Any person who observes violations of church guidelines or has reasonable suspicions of inappropriate activity is required to report these concerns to an appropriate leader.

Fill out the Incident Report of Suspected Child Abuse document including specifics of what you have observed.

Contact the program leader, youth pastor, or senior pastor as soon as possible. In a private conversation, the program leader or pastor can help evaluate any suspicions.

The program leader or pastor is responsible for any further response to the situation. He or she must document the report in the confidential files. Possible responses can range from reminding the worker about following guidelines to reporting the incident to law enforcement.

All reports and other responses to a particular activity or incident shall be immediately forwarded to the senior pastor.

Church Leaders Responding to Abuse

In cases of a report of an incident of abuse of a child or youth by a church staff or worker, the Safe Sanctuary Committee of Midway United Methodist Church may form a small team consisting of appropriate church leaders, comprising at least the Staff Parish Relations Chairperson, a member of Trustees, Church Council Chairperson, a clergy representative, and any legal counsel they may retain (recommended).

The team should respond quickly to any report of abuse using the following guidelines:

- The team should evaluate the report with the person(s) who heard the initial report.
- The team should decide if a report to authorities is warranted. Guidance of the church's attorney is often necessary because reporting statutes and relevant criminal statutes may be complicated. This is a decision based on the information at hand and applicable laws.
- The team should not attempt to verify the allegations.
- The team should contact law enforcement or social services.

- The team should cooperate with law enforcement under the guidance of the church's attorney.
- With the consent of law enforcement, the team should inform the victim's parents, the accused worker, and the alleged victim that the child and church worker are not to have further contact (including verbal contact). Also, the church worker is to refrain from any children's or youth work until the issue is resolved.
- The team should inform the church's insurance carrier.
- The team should inform the District Superintendent, if circumstances warrant.
- The Staff Parish Relations Chairperson should serve as the spokesperson. All contact with the news media should be handled by the spokesperson. The team should inform all necessary persons not to respond to media inquiries except to refer questions to the spokesperson. Note: the news media will learn of the incident quickly through access to law enforcement records.
- The team should document its activities in writing. Briefly log what is learned and what and when actions are taken. Logs should be dated and initialed or signed each time an entry is made.

Church Workers Responding to Serious Accidents

- Render appropriate first aid and call for appropriate emergency help.
- Provide emotional support to the victim(s) and other young people who may be upset by the accident. (Prayer is usually appropriate!)
- Contact the program leader, youth pastor, or senior pastor as soon as possible after ensuring the safety of victims. One of these leaders should then take charge of responding to the accident using the procedures listed below in this policy.
- Write brief notes about what happened while the event is still fresh in your memory.
- Be cautious about making statements that imply responsibility or provide information against the interests of the church and its workers.

Tips for Dealing with the News Media

Your church may be in the media spotlight if you have a serious accident or case of abuse. In general the media (and the public) want to know about institutions like churches that appear to misuse their authority or contradict their own principles. The fact that we do not expect children to get hurt by church workers makes the story newsworthy.

News of serious incidents usually reaches the media--when a law enforcement agency responds it usually goes on the public record. Since you can't prevent adverse publicity, prepare for it, minimize the damage, and manage it as best you can.

How to Deal with the Media After a Serious Event

- Staff Parish Relations Chairperson should be the spokesperson and refer all inquiries to him or her. Ask everyone to refer media inquiries to the spokesperson. You may have someone in your church that is qualified for this or you may ask your attorney to serve this function.
- Don't lie! Don't cover up! The truth usually comes out anyway. However, this does not mean you have to answer or provide negative information.

- Take your time in responding. You may delay answering inquiries until you are prepared to do so or until you get advice from the response team. Don't let the pressure of the moment force you to say things that are inaccurate or poorly thought out.
- Use "no comment" when necessary. You should not lie, but you do not have to answer media questions. The spokesperson may want to explain why the church is not commenting, so the public doesn't view "no comment" as a way of avoiding difficult questions.

Possible explanations:

"We have no comment out of respect for the privacy of the victims and accused."

"We will not comment until we have a better understanding of what has occurred."

- Present positive information even if you are saying "no comment" to some questions.

Examples:

After a serious allegation of abuse:

"The church is committed to the safety of our young people. We have policies in place focused on child safety and we have a very good record to date. Many kids take part in our church activities every year without any problems. Our prayers and sympathy are with everyone affected by this event. We are doing our best to cooperate with the authorities as they conduct their investigation."

After a serious accident:

"The church deeply regrets that this terrible accident has happened. We take the safety of our youth very seriously. We have policies in place focused on preventing injuries. Many kids take part in our church activities every year and this is the first time an accident like this has happened. We are doing all we can to help the victim and his family and friends in this difficult time. They have our sympathy and our prayers."

- Do not judge the guilt or innocence of anyone accused of wrongdoing. Do not judge whether or not allegations are warranted or true. As the church representative you should express regret that someone may have been harmed, hope for justice, and offer verbal support for people struggling with the effects of the incident.
- Limit your comments to objective facts. Avoid conjecture or broad conclusions.
- Avoid statements that cast blame or doubt on one of the people or families involved in the situation, even if such information may serve to protect the interests of the church.
- Do not give names of sexual abuse victims.
- Avoid naming accused wrongdoers. The media may do this based on public records, but the church should avoid discussing individuals accused of wrongdoing. This might result in a defamation lawsuit brought by the wrongdoer. Consult with the church's attorney before discussing a person accused of wrongdoing with anyone other than church leaders with a need to know.

- Don't say or show anything to reporters that you don't want to be publicized. Going "off the record" is a very murky subject that causes a lot of grief.
- Do not give information and ask to remain anonymous. This is unprofessional and suggests you have something to hide. You may be embarrassed later if your anonymity is not protected.

APPENDIX A

Guidelines for Nursery Workers at Midway United Methodist Church

*Note: We live in an age where child abuse is a reality in our society. The church must deal with this issue as a "good shepherd" by taking steps to protect the children in our care. **Midway United Methodist Church** has implemented a policy that will safeguard our children while promoting a positive, nurturing environment for ministry to them. The guidelines below are to be strictly followed by anyone who has custody or supervision of nursery age children. We pray for God's blessing for our children, workers, and church.*

Before You Begin

Six-Month Rule -- All workers must be members or regular attendees of Midway United Methodist Church for at least six months before working in the nursery. This guideline may be waived for employees.

Completion of Application -- All nursery workers must complete and sign an application form.

Release Authorization Form -- All nursery workers must complete and sign a Release Authorization form.

References -- After gaining the applicant's permission, church leaders will contact references. Persons asked for references may be suggested by applicants or selected by church leaders. The church may contact employers, former ministers, and persons who have supervised applicants in church work previously.

Interview -- All nursery workers must be interviewed by a nursery or church leader to determine their suitability for nursery work. Information from this interview will not be released to unauthorized persons.

Background Check and Social Services Registry -- After gaining the applicant's permission, church leaders will conduct a criminal background check and a registry check for applicants: this is mandatory for primary positions and strongly suggested for secondary positions.

Auto Safety Form -- All nursery workers who will be driving children or conducting other church business must complete and sign an Auto Safety form.

Signed Agreement to Follow Guidelines -- All nursery workers must sign the agreement at the end of these guidelines to show their commitment to observe these guidelines.

Guidelines

Two-Person Rule – Two unrelated adult workers must be present in each nursery room at all times. This rule accomplishes two important objectives. First, it reduces the risk of child abuse. Second, it reduces the risk of unfounded claims of abuse.

Roamers— If unforeseen circumstances arise the use of assigned adult “roamers” who move in and out of rooms may be used to meet the two adult requirement. These roamers must be primary workers and meet the minimum primary worker screening standards. The senior pastor must approve this exception to the two-adult rule.

Only assigned workers may be in the nursery. There are two exceptions to this rule: nursing mothers and parents called to the nursery to calm an upset child.

Youth Supervising Youth -- Minors may help adults in nursery activities only under the direct leadership of adults. A minor may not be used to meet the two-person guidelines discussed above. The five year rule must be observed when Youths are allowed to help.

Corporal Punishment (hitting or spanking) and other forms of punishment involving physical pain are never appropriate in Midway United Methodist Church activities. This rule holds true even if parents have suggested, or given permission for, corporal punishment. Nursery workers must consult a nursery leader or other church leader if they need help with discipline techniques.

Workers must report suspected or observed child abuse to the nursery leader or a pastor immediately. Violations of these guidelines or suspect behavior by other workers must be reported in the same manner.

Workers must avoid even the appearance of misconduct. This is needed in order to maintain parental confidence and avoid mistaken allegations.

Workers who disobey these guidelines may be reassigned or relieved from nursery duty at the sole discretion of church leaders.

I have read the guidelines above. I agree to observe them faithfully:

Signature _____ Date _____

Guidelines for Youth and Children's Sunday School Teachers at Midway United Methodist Church

*Note: We live in an age where sexual misconduct and child abuse is a reality in our society. The church must deal with this issue as a "good shepherd" by taking steps to protect the children in our care. **Midway United Methodist Church** has implemented policies to help safeguard our children while promoting a positive, nurturing environment for ministry to them. The guidelines below are to be strictly followed by anyone working in the Sunday school program. We pray for God's blessing for our children, workers, and church.*

Before You Begin

Six-Month Rule -- All workers must be members or regular attendees of **Midway United Methodist Church** for at least six months before teaching Sunday school.

Completion of Application -- All Sunday school teachers must complete and sign an application form.

Release Authorization Form -- All Sunday school teachers must complete and sign a Release Authorization form.

References -- After gaining the applicant's permission, church leaders will contact references. Persons asked for references may be suggested by applicants or selected by church leaders. The church may contact employers, former ministers, and persons who have supervised applicants in church work previously.

Interview -- All Sunday school teachers must be interviewed by a church leader to determine their suitability for teaching. Information from this interview will not be released to unauthorized persons.

Background Check and Social Services Registry -- After gaining the applicant's permission, church leaders will conduct a criminal background check and a registry check for applicants: this is mandatory for primary positions and strongly suggested for secondary positions.

Auto Safety Form -- All Sunday school teachers who will be driving children or conducting other church business must complete and sign an Auto Safety form.

Signed Agreement to Follow Guidelines -- All Sunday school teachers must sign the agreement at the end of these guidelines to show their commitment to observe these guidelines.

Guidelines

Two-Person Rule – Two unrelated adult workers must be present in each Sunday school room at all times. This rule accomplishes two important objectives. First, it reduces the risk of child abuse. Secondly, it reduces the risk of unfounded claims of abuse.

Roamers— If unforeseen circumstances arise the use of assigned adult “roamers” who move in and out of rooms may be used to meet the two adult requirement. These roamers must be primary workers and meet the minimum primary worker screening standards. The senior pastor must approve this exception to the two-adult rule.

Youth Supervising Youth -- Minors may help adults lead children or youth Sunday school activities only under the direct leadership of adults. A minor may not be used to meet the two-person guidelines discussed above and must meet the five year rule.

Corporal punishment (hitting or spanking) and other forms of punishment involving physical pain are never appropriate in Midway Methodist Church activities. This rule holds true even if parents have suggested, or given permission for, corporal punishment. Teachers must consult their supervisors or a pastor if they need help with misbehaving youth or discipline techniques.

Teachers must report suspected or observed child abuse to the ministry leader or a pastor immediately. Violations of these guidelines or suspect behavior by other workers must be reported in the same manner.

Workers must avoid even the appearance of misconduct. This is needed in order to maintain parental confidence and avoid mistaken allegations.

Workers who disobey these guidelines may be reassigned or relieved from Sunday school duty at the discretion of church leaders and/or the senior pastor.

I have read the guidelines above. I agree to observe them faithfully:

Signature _____ Date _____

Guidelines for Vacation Bible School Program at Midway United Methodist Church

*Note: We live in an age where sexual misconduct and child abuse is a reality in our society. The church must deal with this issue as a "good shepherd" by taking steps to protect the children in our care. **Midway United Methodist Church** has implemented policies to help safeguard our children while promoting a positive, nurturing environment for ministry to them. The guidelines below are to be strictly followed by anyone working in the Vacation Bible school program. We pray for God's blessing for our children, workers, and church.*

Before You Begin

Six-Month Rule – All primary workers must be members or regular attendees of Midway United Methodist Church for at least six months before teaching Vacation Bible School.

Completion of Application -- All VBS teachers must complete and sign an application form.

Release Authorization Form – All VBS teachers must complete and sign a Release Authorization form.

References -- After gaining the applicant's permission, church leaders will contact references. Persons asked for references may be suggested by applicants or selected by church leaders. The church may contact employers, former ministers, and persons who have supervised applicants in church work previously.

Interview -- All VBS teachers must be interviewed by a ministry leader to determine their suitability for teaching. Information from this interview will not be released to unauthorized persons.

Background Check and Social Services Registry -- After gaining the applicant's permission, church leaders will conduct a criminal background check and a registry check for applicants: this is mandatory for primary positions and strongly suggested for secondary positions.

Auto Safety Form -- All VBS teachers who will be driving children or conducting other church business must complete and sign an Auto Safety form.

Signed Agreement to Follow Guidelines -- All VBS teachers must sign the agreement at the end of these guidelines to show their commitment to observe these guidelines.

Guidelines

Two-Person Rule -- Two unrelated workers must be present in each VBS room at all times. VBS teachers will be considered primary workers and they will have to meet all the screening requirements for a primary worker prior to the beginning of Vacation Bible School. This rule accomplishes two important objectives. First, it reduces the risk of child abuse. Secondly, it reduces the risk of unfounded claims of abuse.

Roamers— If unforeseen circumstances arise the use of assigned adult “roamers” who move in and out of rooms may be used to meet the two adult requirement. These roamers must be primary workers and meet the minimum primary worker screening standards. The senior pastor must approve this exception to the two-adult rule.

Youth Supervising Youth -- Minors may help adults lead VBS activities only under the direct leadership of adults. A minor may not be used to meet the two-person guidelines discussed above and must meet the five year rule. (5 years older than oldest child)

Corporal punishment (hitting or spanking) and other forms of punishment involving physical pain are never appropriate in Midway United Methodist Church activities. This rule holds true even if parents have suggested, or given permission for, corporal punishment. Teachers must consult their supervisors or a pastor if they need help with misbehaving youth or discipline techniques.

Teachers must report suspected or observed child abuse to the ministry leader or a pastor immediately. Violations of these guidelines or suspect behavior by other workers must be reported in the same manner.

Workers must avoid even the appearance of misconduct. This is needed in order to maintain parental confidence and avoid mistaken allegations.

Workers who disobey these guidelines may be reassigned or relieved from Vacation Bible School duty at the discretion of church leaders and/or the senior pastor.

I have read the guidelines above. I agree to observe them faithfully:

Signature _____ Date _____

Guidelines for Children's Church at Midway United Methodist Church

*Note: We live in an age where sexual misconduct and child abuse is a reality in our society. The church must deal with this issue as a "good shepherd" by taking steps to protect the children in our care. **Midway United Methodist Church** has implemented policies to help safeguard our children while promoting a positive, nurturing environment for ministry to them. The guidelines below are to be strictly followed by anyone working in the Children's Church program. We pray for God's blessing for our children, workers, and church.*

Before You Begin

Six-Month Rule -- All workers must be members or regular attendees of **Midway United Methodist Church** for at least six months before teaching Sunday school.

Completion of Application -- All Children's Church teachers must complete and sign an application form.

Release Authorization Form -- All Children's Church teachers must complete and sign a Release Authorization form.

References -- After gaining the applicant's permission, church leaders will contact references. Persons asked for references may be suggested by applicants or selected by church leaders. The church may contact employers, former ministers, and persons who have supervised applicants in church work previously.

Interview -- All Children's Church teachers must be interviewed by a church leader to determine their suitability for teaching. Information from this interview will not be released to unauthorized persons.

Background Check and Social Services Registry -- After gaining the applicant's permission, church leaders will conduct a criminal background check and a registry check for applicants: this is mandatory for primary positions and suggested for secondary positions.

Signed Agreement to Follow Guidelines -- All Children's Church teachers must sign the agreement at the end of these guidelines to show their commitment to observe these guidelines.

Guidelines

Two-Person Rule -- Two unrelated adult workers must be present in the children's church room at all times. This rule accomplishes two important objectives. First, it

reduces the risk of child abuse. Secondly, it reduces the risk of unfounded claims of abuse.

Corporal punishment (hitting or spanking) and other forms of punishment involving physical pain are never appropriate in Midway United Methodist Church activities. This rule holds true even if parents have suggested, or given permission for, corporal punishment. Teachers must consult their supervisors or a pastor if they need help with misbehaving youth or discipline techniques.

Teachers must report suspected or observed child abuse to the ministry leader or a pastor immediately. Violations of these guidelines or suspect behavior by other workers must be reported in the same manner.

Workers must avoid even the appearance of misconduct. This is needed in order to maintain parental confidence and avoid mistaken allegations.

Workers who disobey these guidelines may be reassigned or relieved from Children's Church duty at the discretion of church leaders and/or the senior pastor.

I have read the guidelines above. I agree to observe them faithfully:

Signature _____ Date _____

Guidelines for Youth Group Programs at Midway United Methodist Church

*Note: We live in an age where child abuse is a reality in our society. The church must deal with this issue as a "good shepherd" by taking steps to protect the children in our care. **Midway United Methodist Church** has implemented a policy that will safeguard our children while promoting a positive, nurturing environment for ministry to them. The guidelines below are to be strictly followed by anyone working with youth in **Midway United Methodist Church**. We pray for God's blessing for our children, workers, and church.*

Before You Begin

Six-Month Rule -- All workers must be members or regular attendees of Midway United Methodist Church for at least six months before becoming youth workers (except compensated employees).

Completion of Application -- All youth program leaders must complete and sign an application form.

Release Authorization Form -- All youth program workers must complete and sign a Release Authorization form.

References -- After gaining the applicant's permission, church leaders will contact references. Persons asked for references may be suggested by applicants or selected by church leaders. The church may contact employers, former ministers, and persons who have supervised applicants in church work previously.

Interview -- Youth leaders must be interviewed by a church representative to determine their suitability for youth group work. Information from this interview will not be released to unauthorized persons.

Background Check and Social Services Registry -- After gaining the applicant's permission, church leaders will conduct a criminal background check and a registry check for applicants: this is mandatory for primary positions and strongly suggested for secondary positions.

Auto Safety Form -- All individuals working with youth programs who will be driving children or conducting other church business must complete and sign an Auto Safety form.

Signed Agreement to Follow Guidelines -- All youth leaders must sign the agreement at the end of these guidelines to show their commitment to observe these guidelines.

Guidelines

Two-Adult Rule -- Whenever feasible a youth will not be in the immediate care of one adult. At least two unrelated adults who have been approved for youth and children's work will supervise all youth and children's programs and activities. For field trips and church activities held offsite at least one youth or children's worker should be the same gender as the children on this activity. If boys and girls are participating, the adults of both genders should be present. This policy's purpose is to provide for more than one adult to help ensure appropriate levels of supervision, protect adults from unfounded allegations, and lessens the possibility of an adult having undue influence over an individual youth.

Roamers— In certain circumstances for onsite programs and activities the use of assigned adult "roamers" who move in and out of rooms can be used to meet the two adult requirements. These roamers must be primary workers and meet the minimum primary worker screening standards. The senior pastor must approve this exception to the two-adult rule on a case by case basis for the particular children's or youth ministry.

Overnight Activities -- At least two adults will supervise overnight activities. If the participants are male and female, then male and female chaperons must be present. If these conditions cannot be met, then the event should be postponed. It is never appropriate for an adult chaperon who is not a family member to share a bed with a youth. Males and females attending events must not share the same sleeping quarters and should have separate access to bathroom facilities. Experienced adult workers should be included with adults who are newcomers to youth ministry.

High Adventure Activities -- Special precautions must be taken on high adventure activities, such as rock climbing, hiking, overnight camps, raft trips, or the like. Both physical safety and safety from abuse are at risk in high adventure situations. A high ratio of adults to youth is recommended.

High adventure camping often raises unique circumstances involving individual privacy, sleeping arrangements, bathroom facilities, and so on. Adult leaders must be vigilant to avoid suspicious or misinterpreted behavior in these circumstances.

Individual Counseling -- Team counseling is preferable whenever possible! When team-counseling sessions are not feasible, notify another adult of the location and with whom you are meeting. Individual counseling should be avoided if at all possible. Counseling should be done in a public place where private conversations are possible but occur in full view of others. Guard carefully to avoid seclusion. If possible, have female adults counsel female youths and males counsel males. A male/female team is generally appropriate for counseling either gender.

Long -Term Counseling -- Youth workers should not meet with youth more than three times to discuss the same issue. Youth workers are not prepared or supported for long-term counseling or formal therapy. Adult leaders are encouraged to refer youth that they suspect have a serious need for counseling to professionals in the community. Questions about referral must be discussed promptly with the youth program leader or the pastor.

Informal Contact (Independent of Church Activities) -- Informal contact refers to phone calls, letters, or face-to-face contact between an adult worker and a youth that is not connected to official church activities. The church recognizes that informal contact between worker and youth frequently occurs. For example, workers may hire teens as baby sitters for their own children, or workers may see kids during social events with the child's family. This interaction is usually legitimate and beneficial. However, workers should seek permission of parents before having informal contact with their child. The worker should clearly let the parent know the nature of the contact and that it is not part of church activity. Parents are responsible for monitoring this informal contact.

Transportation To and From Meetings -- Transportation to and from meetings is not part of church or youth group activities. Parents are responsible for providing or arranging for this transportation. Parents are discouraged from asking leaders to transport children. However, if a leader does transport a child at the parent's request, this should be recognized as informal contact (not a part of church activities), and the guidelines for informal contact should be followed.

Transportation as a Part of Church Programs -- The church may from time to time provide transportation as an official part of church activities. For example, the church may provide transportation to out-of-town events or field trips. When children are transported as a part of church activities, all guidelines will apply. Following the two-adult rule and having all drivers complete an auto safety certification form are especially important.

Confidentiality -- Youth workers must report to a clergy person if a minor discusses **harming himself or others, committing a crime, or being abused**. There are limits to confidentiality when working with youth. Questions about such cases or other issues of confidentiality must be discussed promptly with the youth minister (or senior minister if the youth minister is out of town). Any serious issues discussed in confidence should be reviewed with one of the ministers, who will also protect the confidential nature of the discussion. Conferring with a minister on sensitive issues is not considered breaking a confidence.

Youth Supervising Youth -- Minors may help adults lead youth activities only under the direct leadership of adults. A minor may not be used to meet the team leadership or team counseling guidelines discussed above.

Gifts -- Youth workers are generally discouraged from giving personal gifts or money to youth. When the giving of personal gifts is desired, the youth worker must first notify parents and the youth minister. Gifts can be easily misinterpreted. Gifts given to groups of young people are appropriate, such as graduation presents or awards for participation.

Corporal Punishment -- Corporal punishment (hitting or spanking) and other forms of punishment involving physical pain are not appropriate in Midway United Methodist Church activities. This rule holds true even if parents have suggested, or given permission for, corporal punishment. Youth workers must consult their supervisors or a minister if they need help with misbehaving youth or discipline techniques.

Open Door Policy -- All youth events **must** be open door. This means that workers, parents, and church members have a right to observe any youth activity.

Commented [SH13]: should to must

Dating or Sexual Involvement -- No youth program worker (adult) is to date a youth or be romantically or sexually involved with a youth. Any adult with prior incidents of sexual misconduct may not be a youth worker or serve in any capacity of youth ministry at **Midway United Methodist Church**. There are no exceptions to this guideline.

Workers must report suspected or observed misconduct by other workers to the youth program leader or senior pastor immediately.

Supervision and Communication -- Youth workers must meet on a regular basis with the youth program leader, and the youth program leader must meet with the senior pastor periodically to discuss any issues regarding these guidelines. Appropriate topics that must be discussed include problems, accountability, policy clarification, personal feelings, or other issues that may interfere with youth ministry efforts.

Workers must avoid even the appearance of misconduct. This is necessary in order to maintain parental confidence and avoid mistaken allegations.

Workers who disobey these guidelines may be reassigned or relieved from youth program duty at the discretion of church leaders.

I have read the guidelines above. I agree to observe them faithfully:

Signature _____ Date _____

Guidelines for Preschool, Youth and Children's Choir Leaders at Midway United Methodist Church

*Note: We live in an age where child abuse is a reality in our society. The church must deal with this issue as a "good shepherd" by taking steps to protect the children in our care. **Midway Methodist Church** has implemented a policy that will safeguard our children while promoting a positive, nurturing environment for ministry to them. The guidelines below are to be strictly followed by anyone working with children's and youth choir **Midway Methodist Church**. We pray for God's blessing for our children, workers, and church.*

Before You Begin

Six-Month Rule -- All workers must be members or regular attendees of **Midway United Methodist Church** for at least six months before becoming youth or children's choir workers (except compensated employees).

Completion of Application -- All youth and children's choir leaders must complete and sign an application form.

Release Authorization Form -- All youth and children's choir workers (primary) must complete and sign a Release Authorization form.

References -- After gaining the applicant's permission, church leaders will contact references. Persons asked for references may be suggested by applicants or selected by church leaders. The church may contact employers, former ministers, and persons who have supervised applicants in church work previously.

Interview -- Youth and children's choir leaders must be interviewed by a church representative to determine their suitability for youth group work. Information from this interview will not be released to unauthorized persons.

Background Check and Social Services Registry -- After gaining the applicant's permission, church leaders will conduct a criminal background check and a registry check for applicants: this is mandatory for primary positions and strongly suggested for secondary positions.

Auto Safety Form -- All choir leaders who will be driving children or conducting other church business must complete and sign an Auto Safety form.

Signed Agreement to Follow Guidelines -- All youth and children's choir leaders must sign the agreement at the end of these guidelines to show their commitment to observe these guidelines.

Guidelines

Two-Adult Rule -- Whenever feasible a youth will not be in the immediate care of one adult. At least two unrelated adults who have been approved for youth and children's work will supervise all youth and children's programs and activities. For field trips and church activities held offsite at least one youth or children's worker should be the same gender as the children on this activity. If boys and girls are participating, the adults of both genders should be present. This policy's purpose is to provide for more than one adult to help ensure appropriate levels of supervision, protect adults from unfounded allegations, and lessens the possibility of an adult having undue influence over an individual youth.

Roamers— In certain circumstances for onsite programs and activities the use of assigned adult "roamers" who move in and out of rooms can be used to meet the two adult requirements. These roamers must be primary workers and meet the minimum primary worker screening standards. The senior pastor must approve this exception to the two-adult rule on a case by case basis for the particular children's or youth ministry.

Overnight Activities -- At least two adults will supervise overnight activities. If the participants are male and female, then male and female chaperons must be present. If these conditions cannot be met, then the event should be postponed. It is never appropriate for an adult chaperon who is not a family member to share a bed with a youth. Males and females attending events must not share the same sleeping quarters and should have separate access to bathroom facilities. Experienced adult workers should be included with adults who are newcomers to youth ministry.

Individual Counseling -- Team counseling is preferable whenever possible! When team-counseling sessions are not feasible, notify another adult of the location and with whom you are meeting. Individual counseling should be avoided if at all possible. Counseling should be done in a public place where private conversations are possible but occur in full view of others. Guard carefully to avoid seclusion. If possible, have female adults counsel female youths and males counsel males. A male/female team is generally appropriate for counseling either gender.

Long -Term Counseling -- Youth workers should not meet with youth more than three times to discuss the same issue. Youth workers are not prepared or supported for long-term counseling or formal therapy. Adult leaders are encouraged to refer youth that they suspect have a serious need for counseling to professionals in the community. Questions about referral must be discussed promptly with the youth program leader or the pastor.

Informal Contact (Independent of Church Activities) -- Informal contact refers to phone calls, letters, or face-to-face contact between an adult worker and a youth that is not connected to official church activities. The church recognizes that informal contact between worker and youth frequently occurs. For example, workers may hire teens as baby sitters for their own children, or workers may see kids during social events with the

child's family. This interaction is usually legitimate and beneficial. However, workers should seek permission of parents before having informal contact with their child. The worker should clearly let the parent know the nature of the contact and that it is not part of church activity. Parents are responsible for monitoring this informal contact.

Transportation To and From Meetings -- Transportation to and from meetings is not part of church or youth group activities. Parents are responsible for providing or arranging for this transportation. Parents are discouraged from asking leaders to transport children. However, if a leader does transport a child at the parent's request, this should be recognized as informal contact (not a part of church activities), and the guidelines for informal contact should be followed (see paragraph above).

Transportation as a Part of Church Programs -- The church may from time to time provide transportation as an official part of church activities. For example, the church may provide transportation to out-of-town events or field trips. When children are transported as a part of church activities, all guidelines will apply. Following the two-adult rule and having all drivers complete an auto safety certification form are especially important.

Confidentiality -- **Youth workers must report to a clergy person if a minor discusses harming himself or others, committing a crime, or being abused.** There are limits to confidentiality when working with youth. Questions about such cases or other issues of confidentiality must be discussed promptly with the youth minister (or senior minister if the youth minister is out of town). Any serious issues discussed in confidence should be reviewed with one of the ministers, who will also protect the confidential nature of the discussion. Conferring with a minister on sensitive issues is not considered breaking a confidence.

Youth Supervising Youth -- Minors may help adults lead youth activities only under the direct leadership of adults. A minor may not be used to meet the team leadership or team counseling guidelines discussed above.

Gifts -- Youth workers are generally discouraged from giving personal gifts or money to youth. When the giving of personal gifts is desired, the youth worker must first notify parents and the youth minister. Gifts can be easily misinterpreted. Gifts given to groups of young people are appropriate, such as graduation presents or awards for participation.

Corporal Punishment -- Corporal punishment (hitting or spanking) and other forms of punishment involving physical pain are not appropriate in Midway United Methodist Church activities. This rule holds true even if parents have suggested, or given permission for, corporal punishment. Youth workers must consult their supervisors or a minister if they need help with misbehaving youth or discipline techniques.

Open Door Policy -- All youth events **must** be open door. This means that workers, parents, and church members have a right to observe any youth activity.

Commented [SH14]: should to must

Dating or Sexual Involvement -- No adult youth worker is to date a youth or be romantically or sexually involved with a youth. Any adult with prior incidents of sexual misconduct may not be a youth worker or serve in any capacity of youth ministry at Midway United Methodist Church. There are no exceptions to this guideline.

Workers must report suspected or observed misconduct by other workers to the youth program leader or senior pastor immediately.

Supervision and Communication -- Youth workers must meet on a regular basis with the youth program leader, and the youth program leader must meet with the senior pastor periodically to discuss any issues regarding these guidelines. Appropriate topics that must be discussed include problems, accountability, policy clarification, personal feelings, or other issues that may interfere with youth ministry efforts.

Workers must avoid even the appearance of misconduct. This is necessary in order to maintain parental confidence and avoid mistaken allegations.

Workers who disobey these guidelines may be reassigned or relieved from youth program duty at the discretion of church leaders.

I have read the guidelines above. I agree to observe them faithfully:

Signature _____ Date _____

Guidelines for the Occasional Children's Program at Midway United Methodist Church

*Note: We live in an age where child abuse is a reality in our society. The church must deal with this issue as a "good shepherd" by taking steps to protect the children in our care. **Midway United Methodist Church** has implemented a policy that will safeguard our children while promoting a positive, nurturing environment for ministry to them. The guidelines below are to be strictly followed by anyone working with the occasional children's programs at **Midway United Methodist Church**. We pray for God's blessing for our children, workers, and church.*

Before You Begin

Six-Month Rule -- All workers must be members or regular attendees of **Midway United Methodist Church** for at least six months before becoming children or youth workers (except compensated employees).

Completion of Application -- All program workers must complete and sign an application form.

Release Authorization Form -- All compensated employees and primary workers must complete and sign a Release Authorization form.

References -- After gaining the applicant's permission, church leaders will contact references. Persons asked for references may be suggested by applicants or selected by church leaders. The church may contact employers, former ministers, and persons who have supervised applicants in church work previously.

Interview -- All leaders (primary workers) must be interviewed by a church representative to determine their suitability for youth group work. The interview for secondary workers is optional. Information from this interview will not be released to unauthorized persons.

Background Check and Social Services Registry -- After gaining the applicant's permission, church leaders will conduct a criminal background check and a registry check for applicants: this is mandatory for primary positions and strongly suggested for secondary positions.

Auto Safety Form -- All program workers who will be driving children or conducting other church business must complete and sign an Auto Safety form.

Signed Agreement to Follow Guidelines -- All program leaders must sign the agreement at the end of these guidelines to show their commitment to observe these guidelines.

Guidelines

Team Leadership -- Whenever feasible a youth will not be in the immediate care of only one adult. Teams of adult primary workers (preferably male and female) will supervise activities. This policy provides for more than one adult to help ensure appropriate levels of supervision, it protects adults from unfounded allegations, and it lessens the possibility of an adult having undue influence over an individual youth.

Roamers— In certain circumstances for onsite programs and activities the use of assigned adult “roamers” who move in and out of rooms can be used to meet the two adult requirements. These roamers must be primary workers and meet the minimum primary worker screening standards. The senior pastor must approve this exception to the two-adult rule on a case by case basis for the particular children’s or youth ministry.

Informal Contact (Independent of Church Activities) -- Informal contact refers to phone calls, letters, or face-to-face contact between an adult worker and a child that is not connected to official church activities. The church recognizes that informal contact between worker and a child frequently occurs. This interaction is usually legitimate and beneficial. However, workers should seek permission of parents before having informal contact with their child. The worker should clearly let the parent know the nature of the contact and that it is not part of church activity. Parents are responsible for monitoring this informal contact.

Transportation To and From Outings -- Transportation to and from outings is not part of church or church group activities. Parents are responsible for providing or arranging for this transportation. Parents are discouraged from asking leaders to transport children. However, if a leader does transport a child at the parent's request, this should be recognized as informal contact (not a part of church activities), and the guidelines for informal contact should be followed (see paragraph above).

Transportation as a Part of Church Programs -- The church may from time to time provide transportation as an official part of church activities. For example, the church may provide transportation to out-of-town events or field trips. When children are transported as a part of club activities, all guidelines will apply. Following the two-adult rule and having all drivers complete an auto safety certification form are especially important.

Confidentiality -- workers must report to a clergy person if a minor discusses harming himself or others, committing a crime, or being abused. There are limits to confidentiality when working with children. Questions about such cases or other issues of confidentiality must be discussed promptly with the youth minister (or senior minister if the youth minister is out of town). Any serious issues discussed in confidence should be reviewed with one of the ministers, who will also protect the confidential nature of the discussion. Conferring with a minister on sensitive issues is not considered breaking a confidence.

Gifts -- workers are generally discouraged from giving personal gifts or money to children or youth. When the giving of personal gifts is desired, worker must first notify parents and the program leader or youth minister. Gifts can be easily misinterpreted. Gifts given to groups of children or young people are appropriate, such as awards for participation.

Corporal Punishment -- Corporal punishment (hitting or spanking) and other forms of punishment involving physical pain are not appropriate in Midway United Methodist Church activities. This rule holds true even if parents have suggested, or given permission for, corporal punishment. Youth workers must consult their supervisors or a minister if they need help with misbehaving youth or discipline techniques.

Open Door Policy – All events **must** be open door. This means that workers, parents, and church members have a right to observe any youth activity.

Commented [SH15]: should to must

Workers must report suspected or observed misconduct by other workers to the youth program leader or senior pastor immediately.

Supervision and Communication -- Program workers must meet on a regular basis with the program leader, and the program leader must meet with the senior pastor periodically to discuss any issues regarding these guidelines. Appropriate topics that must be discussed include problems, accountability, policy clarification, personal feelings, or other issues that may interfere with youth ministry efforts.

Workers must avoid even the appearance of misconduct. This is necessary in order to maintain parental confidence and avoid mistaken allegations.

Workers who disobey these guidelines may be reassigned or relieved from youth program duty at the discretion of church leaders.

I have read the guidelines above. I agree to observe them faithfully:

Signature _____ Date _____

Guidelines for Midway United Methodist Church Midway Christian Academy and Mother's Day Out

*Note: We live in an age where child abuse is a reality in our society. The church must deal with this issue by taking steps to protect the children in our care. **Midway United Methodist Church** has implemented a policy that will safeguard our children while promoting a positive, nurturing environment for ministry to them. The guidelines below are to be strictly followed by anyone working with preschool children at **Midway United Methodist Church**. We pray for God's blessing for our children, workers, and church.*

Before You Begin

Completion of Application -- All preschool leaders, teachers, primary workers and secondary workers must complete and sign an application form.

Release Authorization Form -- All preschool leaders, teachers, and primary workers must complete and sign a Release Authorization form.

References -- After gaining the applicant's permission, church leaders will contact references. Persons asked for references may be suggested by applicants or selected by church leaders. The church may contact employers, former ministers, and persons who have supervised applicants in church and educational work previously.

Interview -- All leaders, teachers, and workers must be interviewed by a church or preschool representative to determine their suitability for this ministry. Information from this interview will not be released to unauthorized persons.

Background Check and Social Services Registry -- After gaining the applicant's permission, church or preschool leaders will conduct a criminal background check and a registry check for applicants. This is mandatory for preschool leaders, teachers, and primary worker positions.

Auto Safety Form -- All preschool employees and volunteers who will be driving children or conducting other church business must complete and sign an Auto Safety form.

Signed Agreement to Follow Guidelines -- All preschool employees and workers must sign the agreement at the end of these guidelines to show their commitment to observe these guidelines.

Guidelines

Two-Person Rule -- Two unrelated workers should be present in each preschool room at all times. This rule accomplishes two important objectives. First, it reduces the risk of child abuse. Secondly, it reduces the risk of unfounded claims of abuse.

Roamers— As a safeguard the use of an assigned “roamer” who moves in and out of rooms may be used to meet the two adult requirements. This roamer must be a primary worker and meet the minimum primary worker screening standards. In most cases it would be the director of the preschool.

Transportation To and From School -- Transportation to and from preschool is not part of church or preschool activities. Parents are responsible for providing or arranging for this transportation. Parents are discouraged from asking leaders, teachers, or preschool workers to transport children. However, if a leader, teacher, or preschool worker does transport a child at the parent's request, this should be recognized as informal contact and this is not part of preschool activity. The parents of the preschooler should initial a note stating that they understand that they are responsible for this action.

Transportation as a Part of Preschool Program -- The preschool may from time to time provide transportation as an official part of preschool activities. For example, the preschool may provide transportation for field trips. When children are transported as a part of preschool activities, all guidelines will apply. Following the two-adult rule and having all drivers complete an auto safety certification form are especially important.

Gifts – Preschool leaders, teachers, and preschool workers as a general rule are not to give personal gifts or money to children. Gifts can be easily misinterpreted. Gifts given to groups of children are appropriate, such as presents for certain achievements or awards for participation.

Open Door Policy -- All preschool events **must** be open door. This means that pastors, parents, and church members have a right to observe any preschool activity.

Commented [SH16]: should to must

Corporal Punishment -- Corporal punishment (hitting or spanking) and other forms of punishment involving physical pain are never appropriate in Midway United Methodist Church activities. This rule holds true even if parents have suggested, or given permission for, corporal punishment. Teachers or preschool workers must consult their supervisors or a pastor if they need help with misbehaving youth or discipline techniques.

Supervision and Communication – Preschool teachers must meet on a regular basis with the preschool director, and the preschool director must meet with the senior pastor periodically to discuss any issues regarding these guidelines. Appropriate topics that must be discussed include problems, accountability, policy clarification, personal feelings, or other issues that may interfere with the preschool ministry efforts.

Preschool leaders, teachers, and workers must avoid even the appearance of misconduct. This is necessary in order to maintain parental confidence and avoid mistaken allegations.

Anyone who disobeys these guidelines may be reassigned or relieved from the preschool program at the discretion of church/preschool leaders.

I have read the guidelines above. I agree to observe them faithfully:

Signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX B

Midway United Methodist Church

Personnel File Checklist

Name _____ Date _____

Reviewer _____

Has applicant been a church member for at least six months? **Y N Waived**

R = Received, **W** = Waived, **NR** = Not Required.

Items contained in this file:

Initials/Date

- Signed Application Form **R** **W** **mandatory**
- Signed Release and Authorization Forms **R** **W** **mandatory**
- Reference 1 **R** **W** **mandatory**
- Reference 2 **R** **W** **mandatory**
- Reference 3 **R** **W** **NR**
- Interview Notes **R** **W** **NR**
- Criminal/Court Records Background Check **R** **W** **NR**
- Child Abuse Registry Check (if available) **R** **W** **NR**
- Signed Auto Safety Form (if driving) **R** **W** **NR**
- Copy of Driver's License and Proof of
Insurance (if driving) **R** **W** **NR**
- Signed Permission/Waiver Form **R** **W** **mandatory**
- Special Waiver Forms (if needed) **R** **W** **NR**
- Signed Copy of Applicable
Guidelines for Youth Workers **R** **W** **mandatory**

The applicant has:

- Received a copy of the job description(s) **R** **W** **NR**
- Received a copy of the applicable
Guidelines for Children and Youth Workers **R** **W** **NR**
- Attended appropriate training **R** **W** **NR**
- Current CPR and first aid certification **R** **W** **NR**

Pre-School, Children's and Youth Ministry Application

You may use this form in three ways:

1. As a supplement to other, more detailed applications that your church may use for employees; or
2. As a stand-alone application for primary positions involving volunteers; or
3. As a stand-alone form for screening of existing employees or volunteers.

Date: _____ / _____ / _____

Note: This form is to be completed by all applicants (Primary volunteers and employees) for any position involving supervision or custody of minors. This application is used by Midway United Methodist Church to help promote a safe environment for the children and youth that participate in our programs or use our facilities.

Any applicant who has ever been convicted of child sexual abuse, physical abuse, or domestic violence should not volunteer service in any church sponsored activity or program for children or youth. Applicants with criminal records of other types will be evaluated at the discretion of church leaders.

All applicants must study and agree to obey the guidelines that are provided for their program and position within the church's children's and youth ministry.

Please answer each question.

Consistent with relevant law, the information on this application will not be disclosed to unauthorized persons. Circle **Y** for yes or **N** for no. You may use the back of the paper for explanations or you may attach extra pages.

Applicant Identification

Name _____
Last First Middle

Y N Have you used any other names? If yes, please list complete name and dates of use on the reverse side of this application.

Present Address _____
Street City State Zip

Home Phone (____) _____ Work Phone(____) _____

Social Security # _____ Driver's License # _____

What age of children/youth work do you prefer? _____

On what date would you be available? _____

Disciplinary and Legal Background

- Y N** As a church youth worker, do you agree to observe all guidelines and policies regarding working with youth or children?
- Y N** Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense (felony or misdemeanor, except for minor traffic violations)? You will need to answer "yes" if you have entered into a plea agreement, including a deferred sentence or deferred judgment arrangement, in connection with a criminal charge. If you have been convicted of such an offense, please attach a statement of explanation, including nature of offense, date, court where conviction was entered, and any other relevant information.
- Y N** Have you ever been charged with a sexual offense, offense relating to children, or crime of violence? If you have been charged with such an offense, please attach a statement of explanation, including nature of offense charged, date, law enforcement agency making the charge, and any other relevant information.
- Y N** Have you ever been reported to a social services agency, law enforcement authority, child abuse registry, or similar organization regarding abuse or misconduct involving children? If so, provide a description of the circumstances and name and address of the entity receiving the report.
- Y N** Have you ever been subjected to expulsion, reprimand, or other discipline by a church, denomination, or other organization? If so please describe the circumstances and provide the name and address of the church, denomination or religious organization involved.
- Y N** Have you ever been disciplined or dismissed from employment or a volunteer position by any employer, including charitable and religious organizations, following an allegation of sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, or other immoral or inappropriate behavior or conduct? If so please describe the circumstances and the name and address of the employer.
- Y N** Have you ever been the subject of a civil lawsuit involving sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, or other immoral behavior or conduct, involving adults or children? If so please describe the circumstances and provide the name and address of the employer, educational institutions, church, or other organization where the lawsuit, investigation, or allegation arose or occurred.
- Y N** Have you ever been the subject of a complaint or disciplinary proceeding against a professional license or other license held by you, including but not limited to a license to provide child care or similar services?

Y N Have you ever been the subject of any disciplinary action, transfer, or dismissal, or been named as a defendant in a civil or criminal lawsuit, as a result of an accident or mishap involving children? If so please describe the circumstances and provide the name and address of the employer, church, or organization with which you and/or the children were associated at the time of the incident.

Y N Do you have any investigation, review, or disciplinary action pending by an employer, organization in which you volunteered, licensing authority, or professional association for sexual misconduct, violence, or misconduct involving children or youth?

Y N Were you abused as a child? You may refuse to answer this question, or you may discuss your answer in confidence with a pastor or church leader rather than answer on this form. Answering yes or failing to answer will not automatically disqualify an applicant from working with children or youth.

Church Activity

List other churches you have attended over the past five years.

<i>Church Name</i>	<i>Telephone</i>	<i>Contact</i>	<i>Years Attended</i>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Name of church of which you are (check one): _____

___ A member currently ___ most recently a member

___ I have never been member of a church before.

If a member of this church, how long have you been attending Douglasville First Methodist Church? _____

List previous work (church and non-church) involving children or youth.

Use a separate sheet of paper if needed.

<i>Church Name</i>	<i>Telephone</i>	<i>Contact</i>	<i>Type of Work</i>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

List gifts, callings, training, education, or other factors that may have prepared you for work with children and youth. Use a separate sheet of paper if needed.

Employment History

Identify all employers for whom you have worked since the age of 18. Include part-time and temporary employers. Start with your most recent employer. Attach an additional sheet if necessary.

<i>Employer Name & Supervisor's Name</i>	<i>Area Code & Phone Number</i>	<i>Title & Duties</i>	<i>Dates Employed</i>	<i>Reason for Leaving</i>
--	-------------------------------------	---------------------------	-----------------------	---------------------------

Please describe your activities during any gaps in employment in excess of three months. Do not include leave or time off due to illness or medical treatment.

References

<i>Name</i>	<i>Address & Telephone</i>	<i>Years Known/Relationship</i>
-------------	--------------------------------	---------------------------------

Applicant's Statement

I hereby authorize all employers, organizations, churches, and other entities and persons identified in this form to release any information contained in their files or records concerning me.

In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this application by Midway United Methodist Church, I hereby release Midway United Methodist Church and any individual, church, youth organization, charity, employer, reference, or any other person

or organization, including record custodians, both collectively and individually, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me, my heirs, or family, on account of compliance or any attempts to comply, with this authorization. I waive any right that I may have to inspect any information provided about me by any person or organization identified by me in this application. I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE FOREGOING RELEASE AND KNOW THE CONTENTS THEREOF, AND I SIGN THIS RELEASE AS MY OWN FREE ACT.

I understand and agree that it is critical to the mission and ministry of Midway United Methodist Church that all employees and volunteers conform to the highest standards of safety, interpersonal conduct, and sexual morality. I affirm that I will strictly comply with Midway United Methodist Church youth ministry policies and procedures, including those concerning child safety and protection, sexual abuse and misconduct, and interpersonal relationships. I understand and agree that failure by me to abide by such policies and procedures may result in my immediate dismissal, or disciplinary action, all in the discretion of the church.

My responses above are truthful and accurate. I understand and agree that if they are not truthful and accurate, Midway United Methodist Church may determine that I am no longer qualified to be associated with its programs as a church worker, employee, or volunteer in any capacity.

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

Print Name _____

Witness _____ Date _____

To be witnessed by a church staff member

Midway United Methodist Church Guidelines for Interviewing Applicants

Red Flags-- an informal term for any indication that an individual may not be well suited to caretaker roles with children or youth. A red flag raises suspicions and causes program leaders to look more closely at an individual's qualifications or behavior.

Red flags alone do not mean that an individual is a potential danger to youth. But they are possible indicators that an individual may participate in unhealthy relationships with children or even be a child molester. Red flags are signals for program leaders to consider the applicant more carefully, to look a bit deeper into his or her background, and to be especially careful in making decisions to approve or disapprove the applicant.

A specific interest in a certain age group or gender. Child molesters sometimes fixate on children of the same age they were when first molested.

Over-involvement with children and youth. Excessive activity with children or youth may indicate a person is fixated on children or youth, lacks adult outlets for recreation, or is seeking access to youth in a variety of programs.

Lack of adult relationships. Healthy workers have adult relationships for friendships and, when appropriate, for romantic reasons. They do not need to turn to youth to meet their basic need for relationships.

Lack of adult interests. Interest in adult hobbies and in adult groups shows that youth workers have balanced lives that are not overly concentrated on children.

Instability in work and life. Look out for people who move or change jobs frequently and do not have a plausible explanation for it. Child molesters often move from place to place as people become suspicious or to seek out new opportunities to molest children. Instability in work may mean that an applicant has a drug or an alcohol problem.

Gaps in a person's life history. A unexplained gap in a resume or history may mean that the applicant served a prison term or is covering up a difficult time in his or her life.

A history of abuse or family instability. A person who experienced abuse or family problems while growing up may have unresolved emotional issues. These issues can interfere in their ability to work with children. Also, child abuse often occurs in unstable families facing problems with alcohol/drugs, mental illness, extreme poverty, etc.

Stressful events in the applicant's recent past. Events such as the death of a close family member, divorce, marital problems, unemployment, etc., often cause stress. This stress can lead applicants to react in unhealthy ways.

Evasive or misleading answers. Dishonesty is an indicator that a person is not trustworthy enough for working with kids and may be hiding vital information.

Rigidity in belief or doctrines. Applicants may have strong beliefs, but they should demonstrate flexibility in dealing with different points of view and accepting people as they are. A larger-than-expected proportion of child abusers come from rigid, orthodox backgrounds that encourage a one-dimensional perspective on important issues. Be cautious with applicants who have an overly-strong, personal agenda for youth. Look out for statements such as "I want to train children to believe in God just like I do" or "Children today are spoiled, so I want to teach them the strong discipline I grew up with."

What To Look For

- Applicants with a clear explanation of why they want to work with youth.
- Applicants with well-balanced lifestyles involving work, family, friends, recreation, and spiritual growth.
- Applicants who have demonstrated maturity and people skills over the long term in their life experiences.
- Applicants who are open to differences in people, flexible in dealing with people, and have a sense of humor.
- Applicants who demonstrate appropriate reactions to stress.
- Applicants who understand the need for screening and supervision and who react to it positively rather than defensively.

Interview Questions

Start the interview with a reminder that "information will not be disclosed to unauthorized people." Begin with light questions and ask the more personal ones as the applicant relaxes.

1. Tell me about your family when you were growing up.
2. What were your family's religious beliefs when you were a child?
3. Tell me about your hobbies and interests outside of church.
4. What is the biggest problem in children's lives right now? (Look for a coherent, well-reasoned answer that demonstrates the applicant has thought about kids' problems.)
5. Give me a brief rundown of your life. (Follow up with questions to address where they grew up, their childhood, education, work experience, churches they have been a member of, job and residence changes, etc.)
6. Tell me about other work with children you have done.
7. Is there anything else I should know about you that might affect how you work with children at Midway United Methodist Church?

Children's and Youth Worker Reference Form

Our church may use this form in three ways:

1. As a supplement to other, more detailed reference information that your church may use for employees; or
2. As a stand-alone reference form for primary positions involving volunteers; or
3. As a stand-alone form for references of existing employees or volunteers.

Let the reference know that "all information will be held in confidence and will not be released to unauthorized persons."

Applicant Name _____

Reference Name _____

Church or Organization _____

Contact Date _____ Person Contacting the Reference _____

Method of Contact ___ phone ___ letter ___ personal conversation

Reference Questions

How do you know the applicant? For how long have you known him or her?

Would you recommend this applicant for a position of trust supervising youth and children? Why or why not?

At this point ask any relevant and legal questions that are appropriate to the situation, such as specific duties, length of employment, strengths and weaknesses when dealing with young people, etc. Information may be noted on the back of this paper. Remind the reference that "information will not be disclosed to unauthorized persons."

Closing Question

Is there anything else we should know about this person before putting him/her in a position of trust with youth and children?

If required, notarize here. *(When using an embossed seal, please shade with black crayon to clearly show raised area when faxing.)*

Subscribed and sworn before me:

Date _____

Notary Public

My commission expires

Auto Safety Form

This form is intended for all who have responsibility to conduct church business or transport children or youth by personal auto and/or church van or bus. Only persons with valid driver's licenses and valid personal auto insurance may transport others as part of church activities.

Circle either **Y** for Yes or **N** for No. The information on this application will not be disclosed to unauthorized persons.

Y N Are you now a licensed driver? Please present your license to staff so they may copy it for the records.

Y N Do you currently have personal auto insurance? Please present your proof of insurance card to staff so they may copy it for the records.

Y N Have you been ticketed for driving violations (parking tickets not included) within the past 2 years? (If yes, please explain the nature of the tickets on the back of this paper.)

Agreement to Notify of Driving Events

I agree to immediately inform a pastor if my driver's license is suspended or revoked, if I am ticketed for a driving offense, or if I have DUI or DWI charges pending. I must also notify the senior pastor if my personal auto insurance is canceled or not renewed. These notifications are required even if the offenses are not related to church work. The church will not release this information to unauthorized persons. *Note: Being ticketed for a minor offense does not automatically disqualify a worker from transporting people.*

Seat Belt Usage

I agree to transport persons only in passenger seats equipped with appropriate seat belts and child safety seats. I agree to require seat belt usage and child safety seat usage at all times. In buses that are not outfitted with seat belts, this rule does not apply.

Safe Vehicles

I agree to transport persons only in vehicles that are in safe operating condition.

I have truthfully and accurately responded to the questions above. I agree to notify the church if any of the driving events listed above occurs.

Signature _____ Date _____

Please print name _____

***Note to church staff:** This form, together with a copy of the applicant's driver's license and insurance card, should be filed with the applicant's application.*

APPENDIX C

Midway United Methodist Church Trip Planning Sheet

Instructions

Church policy requires children's and youth ministry workers to complete this form prior to events involving children that meet any of the following three standards:

1. Trips that are estimated to be longer than 50 miles round trip,
2. Overnight events (in town or out)
3. Taking young people to participate in activities that may pose special hazards, such as swimming, boating, camping/hiking, cycling, climbing/rope courses, skiing, airplane flights, or similar.

Submitted by:

Name _____ Date _____

Approved by:

Name _____ Date _____

Who is going on this trip?

Sunday school _____

Youth group _____

Other _____

Adult workers who will be going:

Name _____

Name _____

Adult workers who will be driving:

Name _____

Name _____

Destination: _____

When will you leave? Date _____ Time _____

When do you expect to return? Date _____ Time _____

Emergency phone number(s) where you can be reached (if possible):

If phone contact is not possible, what is the best way to contact you in an emergency?
(i.e., sheriff's department, park ranger, resort management, etc.)

How are you traveling: Church vehicle _____
Private auto _____
Other _____

Check any hazardous activities you expect to participate in during this trip.

Please be prepared to discuss these hazards and precautions with the church leader approving this form. *Note: Any activities prohibited by your church's insurance coverage should be listed above so that they can be discussed in advance.*

___ swimming ___ boating ___ camping/hiking ___ cycling

___ climbing/rope courses ___ skiing ___ airplane flights ___ other

Checklist:

___ Permission waivers signed by parents/guardians (including emergency medical permission)

___ Permission waivers available during trip

___ First aid kit

___ Safety and maintenance checklist if church vehicle used

Miscellaneous notes, additional plans, precautions regarding this trip:

Permission/Waiver Form

Name of Child or Adult Participant (please print) _____

Parent and/or legal guardian of child participant _____

Address _____

Home Phone (____) _____ Work Phone (____) _____

Age of Child _____ Birth Date _____ Academic Grade _____

School _____

Functions and Activities

It is my understanding that participating in the programs and recreational and other activities of Midway United Methodist Church is a privilege. Prior to my participation in such activities, I acknowledge that there are certain risks associated with the activities, including, by way of example, physical injury due to activity-related accidents, physical injury due to transportation-related accidents, illness, or even death. In addition, I acknowledge that there may be other risks inherent in these activities of which I may not be presently aware.

Release of Liability

By signing this Permission/Waiver Form, I expressly warrant that the child named above or I, if I am a participant, am capable of withstanding both the physical and mental demands of the activities discussed above. I also expressly assume all risks of the child or me participating in the activities, whether such risks are known or unknown to me at this time. I further release Midway United Methodist Church and its ministers, leaders, employees, volunteers, and agents from any claim that my child may have or that I may have against them as a result of injury or illness incurred during the course of participation in the activities. This release of liability shall include (without limitation) any claims of negligence or breach of warranty. This release of liability is also intended to cover all claims that members of the child's or my family or estate, heirs, representatives, or assigns may have against Midway United Methodist Church or its ministers, leaders, employees, volunteers, or agents.

I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless Midway United Methodist Church and its ministers, leaders, employees, volunteers, or agents from any and all claims arising from my participation in its activities and programs, or as a result of injury or illness of my child during such activities.

First Aid and Emergency Medical Treatment

I recognize that there may be occasions where the child named above or I, if I am a participant, may be in need of first aid or emergency medical treatment as a result of an accident, illness, or other health condition or injury. I do hereby give permission for agents of Midway United Methodist Church to seek and secure any needed medical attention or treatment for the child named above or me, if I am a participant, including hospitalization, if in the agent's opinion such need arises. In doing so I agree to pay all fees and costs arising from this action to obtain medical treatment.

I give permission for attending physician(s) and other medical personnel to administer any needed medical treatment, including surgery and, again, I agree to pay for the medical treatment.

Special Events and Field Trips

I understand that the child named above or I will be participating in (*insert name of special event or activity*) _____ from _____ until _____. I understand that during this period my child/ward or I, if I am an adult participant, may take part in activities such as _____ and other activities consistent with the purposes of the church.

Publicity

On occasion, Midway United Methodist Church takes photographs or makes an audio or videotape recording of children and/or adults involved in church activities. Such photographs or video records may be used by staff and participants to remember the activities and participants. In addition, such photographs and audio/visual recordings may be used in Midway United Methodist Church publications or advertising materials to let others know about our ministry. In addition, local news organizations may hear of our activities or events, and our church may invite or allow them to photograph or record our events for news reporting on special interest features. I consent to the use of any such audio or visual record of the child named above or me, if I am participating, to be used, distributed, or displayed as agents of the church see fit. This consent includes but is not limited to photographs, videotape, and audio recordings. Furthermore, I give permission for the child to be interviewed by the news media, or for such photographs and other audio or visual records to be used by the news media.

Health Insurance Information

Insurance Company _____

Policy Number _____

Insurance Company Phone Number _____

Medical Doctor _____

Phone number _____

Emergency Contacts

Names of persons and telephone numbers to call in case of emergency:

Name

_____ Relation _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Swimming Ability

___ Non-swimmer

___ Beginner (capable of swimming for several minutes in deep water)

___ Moderate (capable of swimming several lengths of pool)

___ Advanced (capable of swimming long distances)

Medical History

Special medical needs or concerns (allergies, conditions, dietary needs, medications, etc.):

Other Information

Other information leaders should know about the child or adult participant:

For Use Only if the Participant is a Minor

I represent that I am the parent/guardian of _____, who is under 18 years of age. I have read the above Permission/Waiver Form and am fully familiar with the contents thereof.

I give permission for the child named above to participate in the activities of Midway United Methodist Church, including any special events/activities described above. In consideration for allowing the participation of the child in the activities of Midway United Methodist Church, I hereby consent to the Permission/Waiver Form, including the Release of Liability above, on behalf of the child, and agree that this Permission/Waiver Form shall be binding upon me, my family, heirs, legal representatives, successors, and assigns.

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian _____ Date _____

Print Name of Parent or Legal Guardian _____

Witness Signature _____ Date _____

Adult Volunteers and Employees

As an adult volunteer or church employee, I hereby agree to each of the consents and waivers listed above, including the Release of Liability, as pertaining to my own participation in functions, activities, special events, and field trips.

Signature

_____ Date _____

Young Person's Agreement

I agree to participate in the functions and activities of Midway United Methodist Church, to cooperate with the leaders and other young people, and to conduct myself as a Christian. I promise to respect God, respect myself, respect other persons, and respect property. I understand that my continued participation in church activities depends on my support of this agreement. I understand my failure to obey appointed leaders or established rules may result in my immediate dismissal from an event and my parents coming to take me home.

Signature _____ Date _____

Midway United Methodist Church

Incident Report for Suspected Child Abuse and Accidents

Name of worker (staff or ministry leader) observing or receiving disclosure of child abuse/accident (circle one) information _____

Victim's name: _____ Age or date of birth: _____

Date and place of initial report from victim: _____
Date Place

Get detailed summary of victim's statement:

Give detailed summary of observer and/or witness(es)

Name of person accused by victim: _____

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

Reported to Ordained Ministerial Staff: _____

Name of Pastor: _____

Date/Time of Report: _____

Notes or comments: _____

Reported to Victim's Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

Spoke with: _____

Date/Time of report: _____

Notes or comments: _____

APPENDIX D

Confirmation Letter for Your Church's Insurance Carrier

Dear _____:

I am writing today in regard to the liability insurance policy for Midway United Methodist Church, policy # _____. I would like to confirm the terms and conditions of this policy as part of my church's overall plan of child safety and risk management.

Please answer the following questions about our policy as specifically as possible:

1. Does this policy cover child abuse, neglect, and child sexual molestation by church employees and volunteers?
2. Does this policy cover sexual misconduct by church employees and volunteers?
3. Does this policy cover church volunteers as well as church employees?
4. Will this policy pay for legal fees if the church, its employees, or volunteers are sued?
5. Will this policy pay for damages resulting from emotional distress and physical injuries? If so, in what circumstances?
6. Are lawsuits related to employment practices covered by this policy?
7. Will this policy pay for libel, slander, and defamation claims?
8. Does this policy cover personal vehicles used by employees and volunteers in the course of church activity?
9. Does this policy cover church activities that occur away from church property? in other states? in foreign countries?
10. Does this policy cover errors and omissions by church employees?
11. Please provide us with a list of specific coverages and activities included in this policy.
12. Please provide us with a list of specific coverages and activities excluded by this policy.
13. Based upon your experience insuring other churches, can you give us a list of specific coverages that we lack and should add to our insurance coverage?
14. Please explain the specific actions our church must take if we need to report a claim.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Letter or Announcement to Congregation Announcing Child Safety Policies

Dear _____,

We live in an age where sexual misconduct, child abuse, and accidental injury is a reality in our society. The church must deal with this issue as a "good shepherd" by taking steps to protect the children in our care. The leadership of Midway United Methodist Church will begin implementing new policies to help safeguard our children while promoting a positive, nurturing environment for ministry to them.

Soon, our church will increase our efforts to screen and supervise staff and employees. We are revising operating policies for children's and youth programs. All church workers, volunteers, and employees will be subject to these new guidelines.

I want to assure you that these changes are not a reaction to a problem or "scandal" that has occurred. Instead they represent our best efforts to *prevent* problems in the future.

These changes will mean additional personnel requirements for the children's and youth ministries of our church. Now more than ever we need volunteers and parents to get involved in the lives of the children and youth of our church. The leaders of our church and I believe the children are well worth the effort. We thank you in advance for your cooperation and your patience with this process.

Safe and secure children and youth are a witness to God's love, expressed through careful staff and volunteers. We pray for God's blessing for our children, workers, and church.

Sincerely,

Midway Safe Sanctuary Committee:

Frank Boone, Senior Pastor
Helena Boone, Chair
Robin Phillips, Background Check/Records Maintenance
Verline Dennis, Trainer
Jess Aaron, Trustee Chair
Pam Scherer, MCA Preschool & Mother's Morning Out
Carrie Keller, Nursery Committee Chair
Debbi Leprone, Children & Youth Choir
Dana Williams, Minister to Children
Heather Blackwell, Acolyte Coordinator & Littlest Angels Choir
Teresa Morris, After School Program & Camps
Lloyd Jones, Youth Minister
Alberto Ramirez, Assistant Pastor (Hispanic Ministry)
Debbie Bivins, Lay Leader
Ralph Leprone, Asst. Lay Leader