

NORTH SHORE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
4048 North Bartlett Avenue
Shorewood, Wisconsin 53211

GUIDELINES FOR SAFE SANCTUARY

The relationships at North Shore Presbyterian Church are based upon fundamental Christian principles. Our support of equal opportunity includes the recognition that sexual harassment/child abuse or discrimination on account of race, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, disability or other illegal basis will not be tolerated. Employees, members and visitors have the right to be free of racial or ethnic slurs, unwelcome sexual advances, and any other verbal or physical conduct that constitutes sexual harassment or prohibited discrimination.

Sexual harassment/child abuse in any form is prohibited. Sexual harassment/child abuse can consist of such things as unwelcome, unsolicited or non-reciprocal sexual-advances, requests for sexual favors, sexual innuendoes; sexual oriented jokes, cartoons, pictures, language, gestures, or touching; and coerced sexual relations. North Shore Presbyterian Church will not tolerate this type of conduct in any form.

North Shore Presbyterian Church does not permit or condone any form of sexual harassment/child abuse or prohibited discrimination or any other conduct that has the purpose or affect of unreasonably interfering with a member's or visitor's right to worship. North Shore Presbyterian Church does not permit or condone any form of sexual harassment/child abuse or prohibited discrimination or any other conduct that has the purpose or affect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's or volunteer's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive worship environment. Our intent is to create an environment of **safe sanctuary** for all and to intervene to attempt to prevent any child abuse.

It is the intent of North Shore Presbyterian Church to provide employees, members and visitors with an environment free from any verbal, physical, visual or electronic forms of sexual harassment or other prohibited discrimination. All employees, members and visitors are expected to be sensitive to the rights and feelings of others.

Employees and members are required to take every reasonable action to prevent anyone from engaging in any form of sexual harassment/child abuse or prohibited discrimination, whether against an employee, member or visitor. Employees and members must immediately report any incident of alleged sexual harassment/child abuse or discrimination that occurs to a Pastor or Moderator of the Education Commission following the reporting process described below. We encourage the reporting party to speak with someone whom they feel comfortable.

At the individual's request, anonymity will be maintained insofar as it does not unreasonably impede an investigation and resolution of the complaint. North Shore Presbyterian Church will not tolerate intimidation and retaliation against the reporting party for filing a complaint or participating in an investigation of sexual harassment/child abuse or discrimination. Complaints of such conduct will be handled in the same manner as a complaint of sexual harassment/child abuse or discrimination.

I. Definitions

For the purpose of these policies and procedures the following definitions shall apply:

1. "Child" and "Children" will be used to mean individuals under the age of 18 years.
2. "Youth" will be used to mean individuals ages 10 – 17 in Grades 5 – 12.
3. "Church" will be used to mean North Shore Presbyterian Church.
4. "Commission" will be used to mean the North Shore Presbyterian Church Education Commission.
5. "Pastor(s)" will be used to mean a minister of the Word and Sacrament duly installed at North Shore Presbyterian Church.
6. "Sunday School Coordinator" will be used to mean an Adult duly commissioned to serve in this capacity.
7. "Adult" will be used to mean an individual who is at least 18 years of age.
8. "Employee" will be used to mean an individual who is compensated for providing services to North Shore Presbyterian Church and/or its members, whether that person is treated for employment tax purposes as an employee or an independent contractor.
9. "Volunteer" will be used to mean an individual who is not compensated for providing services to North Shore Presbyterian Church and/or its members.
10. "Worker" will be used to mean an Adult who serves as a Volunteer and/or Employee, and includes any Pastor.
11. "Youth Worker" will be used to mean any Adult, including both Employees and Volunteers, who has responsibility for teaching, assisting, supervising, or caring for children in any manner that involves direct personal interaction and/or communication with children. This includes all Workers whose positions include any

component or function of Youth Worker, even if not as a primary duty. This definition may include Adults who participate in certain activities on an occasional basis, such as participation in overnight trips that also involve Children.

12. "Child Abuse" will be used to mean any verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual mistreatment of a child. Unless the context requires otherwise, the term will not necessarily be limited violent behavior or behavior that would subject a person to criminal prosecution or prosecution in a juvenile justice system.

II. Adult-Child Ratio

We are committed to the following ideal Adult-Child ratio:

Nursery -- One Adult or Youth per 4 Children

Toddlers - Grade 4 -- One Adult or Youth for every 6-8 Children

Youth Activities (Grades 5-12) -- Two Workers

In addition, we undertake to provide staffing according to average/expected attendance.

- A Youth who volunteers, without their parents present, to assist with children shall be at least 12 years of age.
- During Sunday School hour, the Sunday School Coordinator may fulfill the second Adult requirement when only one Adult is present in a given class. The room must have the door unlocked for the Sunday School Coordinator to observe the class at any time. The Sunday School Coordinator does not have to be in the room at all times when there is not a second Adult.

III. Check-In/Check-Out System

Age appropriate check-in/check-out systems shall be established, e.g. a sign-in sheet for children birth-3 years and for activities other than during Sunday morning worship. Information should include drop-off time, pick-up time and pick-up person.

Children may walk home from Church activities if parents have so indicated on a signed permission form.

IV. "A Touch and Toileting Guideline"

Nursery and Toddlers

- Hugging, holding, back rubbing and patting are all acceptable and important ways of communicating love and care for a Child.
- Genital areas should never be touched except during diaper changing and toileting as is appropriate.
- Children should not be tossed in the air, swung by their arms or legs, or tickled.
- Children have the right to refuse touch, except for safety or cleansing.

- Touching should be something the Child wants and should be done respectfully.
- An Adult or Youth should avoid being alone in a room with a Child or a group of Children.
- An Adult or Youth must accompany Children to the lavatory. The Adult or Youth should wait outside until the Children are finished. The door of the lavatories may be propped open so that the Adult or Youth can hear and see what is going on without actually being inside. An Adult or Youth should never be alone in a lavatory stall with a Child.
- If a Child requests help with buttoning or zipping after toileting, the Adult or Youth should comply in the presence of another Adult or Youth.
- When possible, an Adult or Youth of the same gender should assist the Child.

Kindergartners (4 and 5 years olds)

- Hugging is appropriate only with supporting the Child's need but never if a Child declines the desire for such comfort.
- An Adult or Youth should avoid being alone in a room with a Child or a group of Children.
- Children should be accompanied to the lavatory by an Adult or Youth when possible. The Adult or Youth should wait outside until the Children are finished. The door to the lavatory may be propped open so that the Adult or Youth can hear and see what is going on without actually being inside. Touching the genital or buttock areas is never appropriate.
- If a Child requests help with buttoning or zipping after toileting, the Adult or Youth should comply in the presence of another Adult or Youth.
- When possible, an Adult or Youth of the same gender should assist the Child

Grades 1 and Older

- If possible, an Adult or Youth should avoid being alone in a room or lavatory with one Child. Touching the genital or buttock areas is never appropriate.

V. Behavior Expectations and Discipline

Churches rely on Volunteers to implement programs. One of the challenges is to communicate and establish positive behavior. It is important to establish a "Behavior Covenant" that all Children agree upon which is based on the Church's Code of Conduct. There is an established set of consequences for those who are unable to live up to the Covenant.

<p>North Shore Presbyterian Church CODE OF CONDUCT</p> <p>Respect Oneself Respect Others Respect Our Church Property</p>

CONSEQUENCES

- A Child should be given a verbal warning in a manner that should not cause embarrassment. If the Child repeatedly falls short of the expectations of this Covenant, he/she will receive a “time in” (Adult or Youth directly supervising that Child).
- If the Child is not able to control his/her behavior after the “time in” and it is a Sunday morning, an Adult or Youth takes the Child to an usher who will help the Child find his/her family.
- If the Child is habitually disruptive, parents/guardians will be consulted and a conference will be scheduled so that no misunderstanding will occur.
- The parent/guardian may be asked to accompany the Child to the program for a given period of time, or the Child may be excused from the program. We intend that the door will always be open for the Child’s return when he/she is willing to live by the terms of the Covenant.

VI. Youth Activities

A “Covenant of Understanding” shall be developed based on the Church’s Code of Conduct and signed by both Youth and parents/guardians. Behaviors addressed in the covenant shall include:

- Prohibiting the drinking of alcoholic beverages, use of illegal drugs and tobacco.
- Only appropriate public displays of affection should be observed.
- When the activity is overnight:
 - There are separate sleeping areas for each gender; the space should be respected by the opposite gender. If dorm rooms are used, doors to the room will be left open when members of the opposite gender are together.
 - If male and female Youth are involved, there must be at least one Youth Worker of each gender.
 - When Youth Workers share sleeping accommodations with Youth, each sleeping area must have a minimum of one Youth Worker and two Youth. Care should be taken to ensure the privacy of the Youth.
- Separate changing areas must be designated for males and females and designated as off limits to the opposite gender.
- An understanding of the consequences of not behaving in accordance to the Covenant should be included -- such as being sent home at the expense of the parents.

Youth Workers should remember that they are responsible for the Youth and should act accordingly. It is important to relate and participate with the Youth in activities, but the Youth Workers should not encourage activities or behaviors

that would lead to the breaking of the Covenant. At the heart of youth ministry is relationships. The relationships between Youth Workers and Youth are very important; however, Youth Workers need to be sure that they are not alone with a Youth in a private area. If there is reason for a Youth Worker to have a one-on-one conversation with a Youth, it should be held in a public place.

When the youth activity includes the Youth being transported in private cars, Youth Workers must be the drivers. The only exception to that is a Youth driving only him/herself to and from the activity with parental permission. All appropriate permission forms must be completed and handed in to Youth Worker in charge of the event before leaving for such activities.

VI. Reporting of Incidents

The following is intended to protect the Children, members, Employees and visitors as well as the mission of the Church.

- If and when an incident occurs, e.g. physical injury, an argument between Children, the Adult present should immediately afterwards file a Health Safety Incident Report with a Pastor.
- Adult in leadership position of activity shall make random, periodic checks to all areas of the Church building or off site Church sponsored location.
- All Adults shall be instructed to introduce themselves to individuals who are wandering or loitering around areas where Children are present. Suspicious behavior shall be reported immediately to an Adult in a leadership position. (e.g. Pastor, Sunday School Coordinator, Usher, Sexton)

VII. Response to Reported Child Abuse

1. Policy Adult or Youth may be in a position to detect Child Abuse. The policy of the Church is to respond to and report facts that provide reasonable cause to believe that a Child has been subject to or is threatened with Child Abuse.

2. Response to Affected Children If a Child or other person makes statements indicating that a Child has been the subject of Child Abuse, listen. An Adult or Youth who hears the statements should not treat the statements as frivolous and should obtain the Child's name, description, and basic facts that may provide reasonable cause to believe that a Child has been subject to or is threatened with Child Abuse.

3. Report or Indication of Abuse An Adult or Youth who hears statements that may provide reasonable cause to believe that a Child has been subject to or is threatened with Child Abuse should file an Abuse Allegation Report to a Pastor or Moderator of the Commission as soon as practical, and always within 24 hours.

4. Investigation The Pastors, Moderator of the Commission and/or Sunday School Coordinator shall fully inform each other of any report received. The Pastors shall have the primary responsibility to investigate the report. Investigations should be documented in writing, and should be completed promptly.

5. Report to Authorities In the event an investigation discloses reasonable cause to believe that a Child has been subject to or is threatened with Child Abuse, a Pastor and/or others who conducted the investigation shall report the results of the investigation, including documentation, to the appropriate county child welfare agency or local law enforcement agency immediately and in compliance with the reporting requirements of Wisconsin law, particularly section 48.981, Wisconsin Statutes, and should cooperate with the investigation conducted by those agencies. To the extent possible, the report should report only the facts ascertained by the investigation without making comments or accusations. The Pastors, Employees, and Volunteers should not discourage another person from reporting the person's belief that there is reasonable cause to believe that a Child has been subject to or is threatened with Child Abuse.

6. Contact with Insurer and Legal Counsel The Pastors shall inform the Church's liability insurance carrier and the Church's legal counsel of the results of the investigation.

7. Alleged Incident Involving Volunteer In instances involving alleged or potential Child Abuse involving any Volunteer, the matter should be referred to a Pastor for immediate consideration. The report shall be conducted fairly and without conflict of interest and that the Volunteer implicated in the report does not participate in duties involving children until the investigation has been completed and action had been taken on the findings. If the allegation is substantiated, this is cause for immediate dismissal from responsibilities of that position

8. Disclosures of investigative findings Details disclosed by an investigation, including the identities of a putative victim and any suspected perpetrator should be disclosed only to the Pastors, and/or Moderator of the Commission and law enforcement authorities, unless such disclosure is made with the advice of legal counsel.

Attachments: Health and Safety Incident Report
Abuse Allegation Report