

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



Incarnation Lutheran Church

Policy for the Protection of All People from Abuse

Approved by Incarnation Lutheran Church Congregation Council on: 11-15-2016



INCARNATION LUTHERAN CHURCH

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Policy for the Protection of Children & Youth from Abuse

Incarnation Lutheran Church, Shoreview, MN

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INTRODUCTION

For the sake of the witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we are intentional, open and clear about the integrity and standard of conduct to which our congregation is called and to which its leaders are held accountable. This document is intended to provide policies for a “Safe Boundaries” for children and youth in congregational life and will be reviewed/updated on a regular basis.

Theological / Biblical Framework

Children are a blessing and a gift from the Lord. Psalm 127:3 (CEV)

For members in our congregations, creating safe boundaries for children, youth and their families affirms our Baptism into the priesthood of believers.

Directly from the Affirmation of Baptism, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* page 236:

“You have made a public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism: to live among God’s faithful people, to hear the word of God and to share in the Lord’s supper, to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, to serve all people, following the example of Jesus and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?”

As the church, we bear witness to God’s grace in our lives that comes to us through Holy Baptism. As we work together for the well-being of children, youth and their families, we ultimately invite people to receive the Sacrament of Holy Baptism as their situations allow.

Scriptures for Reflection:

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 Moses’ call to action to the Israelites

Mark 10:13-16 Jesus blesses the children

Mark 9:33-37 Who is the greatest?

Mark 4:35-5:1 Jesus stills a storm.

There are many other scriptures in both the Old and New Testament that give the responsibility for care of all children to the adults, parents, grandparents, God-parents and other adults in our faith community. Every congregation is called to be a place of hope and healing for people of all ages in their community.

Acknowledgements

This policy is written to increase our capacity to care for our children and youth.

Resources used to create this document include:

Southwestern MN Synod Safe Havens Guidelines

Northminster Presbyterian Church, Peoria, IL Safe Boundaries Policy

Safe Boundaries for Children, ELCA

The Boy Scouts in America

The Girl Scouts in America

The Episcopal Church – Safeguarding God’s Children

Guidelines for a Safe Boundaries Congregation – First Edition and Second Edition

Christ the King Lutheran Church, New Brighton, MN Safe Boundaries Policy

Camp Wapogasset, Bullying Policy

DEFINITIONS

Relationships among people are at the foundation of Christian ministry and, as such, are central to the life of the church. Defining healthy and safe relationships through guidelines, policies and codes of conduct is not meant, in any way, to undermine the strength and importance of personal interaction in our ministries. Rather, it is to assist in more clearly defining behaviors and practices that allow the church to more fully demonstrate its love and compassion for children and youth in sincere and genuine relationships.

Children and Youth

A child is defined as anyone under the age of 12 years old.

A youth is defined as anyone who is at least 12 years old but not yet 18 years old. A youth may also be an individual who is 18 years old or older but still in high school.

Vulnerable Adults

A **vulnerable adult** is any person 18 years of age or older who receives services from a licensed health care facility or home care or personal care assistance provider in Minnesota or who requires assistance with his or her own care.

Church Personnel

For the purposes of these guidelines, the following are included in the definition of Church Personnel when they are functioning in their respective roles for the church:

1. All Rostered leadership whether stipendiary, non-stipendiary, who are engaged in ministry or service to the church.
2. All paid personnel whether employed in areas of ministry or other kinds of services by the Synod, congregations, schools, camps or other agencies. For example: Preschools, theater groups, choirs and day camps.
3. Those who contract their services to the church, its congregations, schools or other agencies.
4. Volunteers, including any person who enters into or offers him or herself for a church related service or who actually assists with or performs a service, whether or not they have been selected or assigned to do so. Volunteers include members of ministry teams, task forces and

action groups. For example: Adults serving as guides at youth gatherings, as drivers, at camp, in SPARK, IGNITE and FLAME classrooms.

TWO CATEGORIES OF CHURCH PERSONNEL

For the purposes of this policy, the following are included in the definition of Church Personnel who **Regularly** work with and are around children or youth:

- All clergy whether stipendiary, non-stipendiary, who are engaged in ministry or service to the church.
- All persons who supervise or assist with supervising children or youth in ministries, programs or activities more often than occasionally, such as Children, Youth & Family (CYF) paid-staff and short-term contract employees.
- All persons who provide transportation to children or youth without other adults in the vehicle more than occasionally.
- Nursery volunteers, SPARK volunteers, mid-week CYF program volunteers and Youth Group volunteers.

For the purposes of this policy, the following are included in the definition of Church Personnel who **Occasionally** work with and are around children or youth:

- All paid or volunteer Church Personnel whose work regularly takes them throughout the facility or grounds or who have keys giving them access to the buildings on the grounds.
- All persons who supervise or assist with supervising children or youth in ministries, programs or activities infrequently, generally no more than three times a year or for one program or activity during a year that lasts less than a month (i.e. assisting with preparation for Music/Theater Camp, serving as a substitute for CYF Programming, etc.)
- All persons who provide transportation to children or youth without other adults in the vehicle infrequently, generally no more than three times a year (i.e. driving to camp, synod gatherings, service projects, etc.).
- Adults who participate in overnight activities with children or youth once or twice a year.

Definitions of Abuse

Child Neglect: Omission of the child's basic needs, physical, environmental, emotional and nutritional, that are necessary for a child's well being or the failure to protect a child or youth from harm.

Emotional Abuse: Verbal or nonverbal violence toward a child that diminishes a child's sense of dignity, identity or self-worth. Verbal abuse is very common and affects every person at some point in their lives; some more than others. It can be a very devastating form of abuse when the person experiences the attacks frequently. Emotional abuse is mental or emotional injury to a child or youth that results in an observable and/or material impairment in the child or youth's growth, development or psychological functioning.

Physical Abuse: Physical violence toward a child. Physical abuse is non-accidental injury, which is intentionally inflicted upon a child or youth. Often it is the transference of adult anger.

Sexual Abuse or Sexual Molestation: Any sexual contact or interaction with a child by an adult or an older youth. These acts may range from touching of the penis, vagina buttocks or breast/chest area to sexual intercourse. This includes any activity meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of the adult, child or youth.

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

Unlike physical abuse of a child, which may be accidental, child sexual abuse is a premeditated act. Child molesters defy the stereotypes we have created. It is not easy to identify these individuals. Note: Children with handicaps often become targets for all kinds of abuse. Vulnerability to sexual abuse is increased due to physical or mental conditions perceived by the abuser to increase the child's helplessness.

Drug & Alcohol Abuse: Children or youth who show up at church under the influence of alcohol or drugs, who bring these substances with them on church retreats, camp or other activities or those who are reported by peers to be intoxicated may need help to stop dangerous behavior. (See Appendix A: Incarnation Lutheran Church Event Permission Slip for Minor Form)

Economic Exploitation: Economic exploitation is the deliberate use of a child or youth for money or power. This includes forcing a child to work, using someone against their will or using another person's labor without offering them adequate compensation.

Bullying: Is the repeated use of a physical act or gesture, verbal, written or electronic expression with the intent to hurt an individual or group that:

- Causes physical harm to the victim or the victim's property
- Causes the victim to have reasonable fear for himself or his property
- Causes psychological or emotional distress to the victim
- Causes substantial interference to someone's faith formation experience with any combination of the above, while impeding physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.

(For more on Incarnation's specific policy and course of action see Appendix B: Incarnation Guidelines, Policies and Procedures.)

CODE OF CONDUCT OF CHURCH PERSONNEL

Relationships in ministry should, ideally, always be experienced as caring and without intention to do harm or allow harm to occur. This code of behavior is recommended to help Incarnation create safe environments for children and youth and for those who minister with them.

All Church Personnel

- Church Personnel understand that the church will not tolerate abuse of children and youth and agree to comply in spirit and in action with this position.
- Church Personnel agree to not physically, sexually or emotionally abuse or neglect a child or youth.
- Church Personnel agree to not consume or be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or the misuse of legal drugs while participating with children or youth activities and events.
- Church Personnel will respond to children and youth with respect, consideration and equal treatment, regardless of sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, culture or socioeconomic status.
- Church Personnel should serve as positive role models for children and youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, patience and maturity. They should avoid even the appearance of favoritism or impropriety.
- Church Personnel agree to comply with the congregation's local policies for general conduct with children and youth.
- In the event that Church Personnel observe any inappropriate behaviors or possible policy violations with children or youth, Church Personnel agree to report their observations to the church leadership or their immediate supervisor.
- All Church Personnel acknowledge their obligation and responsibility to protect children and youth and understand there may be legal requirements to report known or suspected abuse of children or youth to appropriate church leaders and state authorities in accordance with these policies.
- Persons who have pled guilty or been convicted of charges of sexual abuse, pornography, rape or physical abuse will not be allowed to work with children, youth or vulnerable adults.
- Persons who have been convicted of misdemeanors but no violent crimes and NOT SEX OR ABUSE RELATED, will not automatically be disqualified from serving with children, youth or vulnerable adults. They must, however meet with the Senior Pastor who will consider each case on an individual basis.
- Follow and ensure the **"Two Adult Rule."** Two adults who have had background checks completed will be present during activities involving children, youth or vulnerable adults. This provision is also met when a supervisor/director is present in the building and makes

unannounced visits to the classroom or if off campus to the sleeping rooms, unless prior written permission is given from the parent or legal guardian. (E.g. SPARK supervisor patrolling halls and observing classes each Sunday or supervisor “checking-in” to each sleeping room, IGNITE hallway monitor).

- Transportation may be an exception to the “Two Adult Rule” under the following, when caravanning to the same location at the same time or prior written permission from parent or legal guardian.
- Leadership for all overnight events/activities or those requiring travel off church property events generally requires adults from both genders in order to take place. A valid exception would be a “same gender” function where adults of the “same gender” are more appropriate.
- Leadership on overnight activities agree to not sleep in the same bed of a child or youth, with the exception of a parent/legal guardian relationship.
- The staff person responsible for a church related event is required to receive photograph or video image release forms signed by parents or guardians of all minors and adult volunteers participating in the event. See Appendix A: Incarnation Lutheran Church Event Permission Slip for Minor.
- Interaction with children or youth outside of church sponsored events:
 - As a representative of Incarnation, when attending community events to develop relationships with children or youth, the volunteer should attempt to communicate with parents as to how they know the child or youth.
 - Volunteers are not allowed to video or take pictures of children or youth at non-church sponsored events without the permission of the parents or guardians.
 - Digital communication via email or social networking websites (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, YouTube, etc.) shall be done in a manner reflective of the mission and values of this policy and the ministries of Incarnation.
- Volunteers and staff members shall reflect the mission and values of Incarnation on all public websites (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.). Volunteers must receive approval by their supervising staff member prior to uploading all digital media from a church sponsored event, because of confidentiality issues with some children or youth.
- In keeping with the spirit of the church, First Aid can be administered to program participants when necessity requires it. This policy item is in no way a substitute for professional administration of care. If the situation is life threatening, any person with reasonable knowledge should make appropriate contact with emergency medical resources and take action to sustain the victim until trained personnel arrive on the scene. In the case of minor cuts, scrapes or other injuries, leaders, church staff and volunteers should attempt to identify the most knowledgeable resources present to assist the victim. Use of generally available materials in First Aid kits serve to guide these practices.

- During camps, weeklong trips or overnight retreats any prescription or over-the-counter medications for children or youth should be given to one staff person or volunteer as designated, in order to record and keep track of when, what and how much medication has been taken.
- In the event a program participant, leader or volunteer is injured during an Incarnation sponsored program activity or such injury occurs on Incarnation property, alert the appropriate supervisor who will determine if an Incident Report Form (see Appendix C) should be completed as soon as possible. Information to complete the form should be obtained as quickly as possible and provided to the Administrator upon completion of the form. This action helps identify proactive steps that may be taken to avoid or minimize future accidents.
- The leader for a group of youth or children must be 21 years of age or older or five years older than the oldest member of the group. In cases where the age of the leader is less than 21, another adult must be present on the premises and serve as a defined Supervisor.

Pastor Supervising the Directors of Children, Youth & Family Ministries

The Pastor supervising the Directors of Children, Youth & Family Ministries of Incarnation or his/her assign will be designated as the Child Protection Policy leader and be responsible to coordinate the church's abuse prevention program and have the following responsibilities:

- Be responsible for oversight of annual training of the staff and volunteers that work with children, youth or vulnerable adults.
- Ensure that awareness training is provided annually to the congregation.
- Ensure that all appropriate training and authorization forms for leaders, volunteers and participants are collected and reviewed. He or she is responsible to communicate notices of cancellation to all affected parties if such requirements are not completed. This may include notification of ineligibility for individuals who have not completed the appropriate Safe Boundaries training process.
- Ensure that upon completion of annual training for volunteers and staff, that appropriate records are transferred to the Administrator in accordance with the church's Child Protection Policy.
- Evaluate the content of the Child Protection Policy every two years, submitting updates to Congregation Council for approval.
- Attend Council meetings as scheduled by the Congregation Council President or Senior Pastor in order to provide regular visibility to the program and benefit from appropriate personnel issues as necessary.
- Provide an annual written report to the Congregation Council which summarizes the effectiveness of current policies and documents the result of changes that may have been made to procedures and policies.
- Will make random visits to church classrooms and activities.

Accountant

- Checks driving records and criminal records of all staff members as part of the background checks.
- Check driving records for those volunteers who will be expected to drive; criminal records and sex offender list of all volunteers.
- Retain confidential records in a secure location.

Administrator

The Administrator of Incarnation or his/her assign will be designated as the keeper of records for references for all staff and volunteers.

- Responsible for confirming personal reference checks of all staff members.
- Audit the confidential records for regular and occasional volunteers and staff on an annual basis to ensure that the records are maintained and secured.
- Ensure that the appropriate records are updated as required. With the help of the Children, Youth and Family team an annual audit of these reports will be completed and given to the Congregation Council Treasurer along with the financial audit.
- Receives Incident Reports from anyone filing a complaint.
- Contacts a Legal Counsel upon receiving an Incident Report as needed. Discusses with Legal Counsel and Senior Pastor any internal communication and/or media responses as needed.
- With prior consent of Legal Counsel, contact appropriate State Child Protection Service in event of a charge being filed but in any case, as required by law.
- With prior consent of Legal Counsel, the Administrator notifies and generates a report to the Synod's Sexual Misconduct Response Coordination Team.
- With prior consent of Legal Counsel, Administrator contacts the church's insurance carrier.

Senior Pastor

- Is encouraged to make random visits to church classrooms and activities.
- With prior consent of the church's Legal Counsel, the Senior Pastor contacts the parents/guardians of children or youth identified on an Incident Report Form (See Appendix C). At their discretion, appropriate resources from outside agencies may be referenced or brought in to assist in this process.
- Maintain a reciprocal relationship with a local church to provide pastoral support for any person alleged to have committed abusive behavior.

Parents/Guardians

- Provide written permission for children, youth or vulnerable adults to attend overnight events/activities or those requiring travel off church property. A signed emergency medical release must also be on file for each person participating in the event/activity.
- Make random visits to church classrooms and activities.
- Provide waiver for image publication.

SCREENING & SELECTION

Any and all Church Personnel who **Regularly** work with or around children or youth should be screened and selected utilizing at least the following:

1. A standard Adult Volunteer Information Form completed by the volunteer that includes an authorization for the release of information to conduct background checks and the code of behavior. (See Appendix D: Adult Volunteer Information Form)
2. Volunteers sign and agree to uphold the Volunteer Covenant Form (See Appendix E: Volunteer Covenant Form).
3. Criminal records check in any state where the applicant has resided during the past seven (7) years and other states, if any, as determined by the church. This check is to be run upon initial application and checked every three (3) years afterwards. (See Appendix F: Background Check Form)
4. Sexual offender registry check in any state where the applicant has resided during the past seven (7) years. This check is to be run upon initial application and checked every three (3) years afterwards. (See Appendix E)
5. Driving or Motor Vehicle records check if the person will be transporting children or youth.
6. Individual interview with the volunteer could be conducted by appropriate Church Personnel based on the purpose of the position. For example, the Associate Pastor of Children, Youth and Family Ministries can interview those serving as Confirmation Guides, the Director of Worship and Music can interview the Joyful Noise Choir Director, the Pastoral Call Committee will interview the Pastor, the Pastor may do primary interviews for Church personnel, all based on the design of the specific ministry program at Incarnation. (See Appendix E)
7. Reference checks could also be conducted by the appropriate Church Personnel based on the purpose of the position. The references given could be of persons outside of the congregation or organization who know the volunteer, preferably who know how the volunteer works with children.

Any and all Church Personnel who **Occasionally** work with or around children or youth should be screened and selected utilizing at least the following:

1. A standard application completed by the volunteer that includes an acknowledgement for the release of information to conduct background checks and the code of behavior. (See Appendix C)
2. Sign and agree to uphold the Volunteer Covenant Form. (See Appendix E: Volunteer Covenant Form).
3. Criminal records/sexual offender registry checks may be conducted at the discretion of supervising staff.

4. Individual interview and/or reference checks may be conducted at the discretion of the supervising staff.
5. Driving or Motor Vehicle records check if the person will be transporting children or youth. (See Appendix E)
6. Adults who participate in overnight activities with children or youth will be subject to a background check, (criminal records/sexual offender registry checks). (See Appendix E)

Volunteer Screening

All information gathered about a volunteer should be carefully reviewed and evaluated to make a determination, in consultation with others as necessary, of whether or not it is appropriate for the volunteer to work with children or youth. Church Personnel who work with or around children or youth should have a personnel file that is kept where other church records are kept.

It is recommended that a person be an active participant in the life of the congregation for a minimum of six months and preferably one year before being invited to work with children and youth.

Education and Training Requirements

Child abuse prevention education and training is required for all Church Personnel who **Regularly** work with or are around children or youth before they start their ministry with children or youth, a portion of which should be completed prior to the start their ministry and the rest of the training within three months of starting.

Church Personnel who are responsible for screening, selection and supervision of others, such as the Pastors and Directors of Children, Youth and Family Ministry, the Director of Worship and Music or the Primary Music Cherub and Joyful Noise Choir Director are encouraged to seek out additional specialized education and training in screening, selection and monitoring.

Child abuse awareness education and training is recommended for all Church Personnel who **Occasionally** work with or are around children or youth before they start their ministry with children or youth.

DESIRABLE AND UNDESIRABLE BEHAVIORS

Christian ministries are committed to creating and promoting a positive, nurturing environment for our Children, Youth and Family Ministries that protect our children and youth from abuse and our Church Personnel from misunderstandings. When creating safe boundaries for children and youth, it is important to establish what types of affection are appropriate and inappropriate; otherwise that decision is left to each individual. Stating which behaviors are appropriate and inappropriate allows Church Personnel to comfortably show positive affection in ministry and yet identify individuals who are not maintaining safe boundaries with children or youth. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by all Church Personnel working around or with children or youth. Volunteers sign and agree to uphold the Volunteer Covenant Form (See Appendix E: Volunteer Covenant Form).

Language We Use

We have an opportunity to foster a community of caring. In all ministry areas we would like to model respect, love and appreciation for others. We strive for a positive and calm environment, where shouts of praise are heard more than shouts of “no” or “stop”. We would like to build a sense of self-worth instead of a sense of fear in all children. Children will imitate what they see and hear so offer them examples of appropriate language and behavior. Before long, they will be encouraging their friends with the same language.

INSTEAD OF SAYING	YOU CAN SAY
“No running!”	“Walk your feet, please” “Sit on your bottom, please”
“Get down!”	“Feet go on the floor” “Feet on the floor for safety” “Be safe with your body”
“No hitting/pushing!”	“Gentle touches” “Jesus gave us hands for helping/clapping/touching...” “I like gentle touches to our friends”
“Shut up!”	“it’s time for us to listen” “It’s my time to talk right now” “listen, please” “quiet voices, please”

Try to:

- Speak in a calm voice
- Speak directly to children
- Encourage them to interact with their peers – don't do the talking for them
- Express yourself in a positive way. It is easier to start doing something than to stop.
- Give children choices.
- Catch them being good and reinforce positive behavior!

Appropriate and Inappropriate Affection

Love and affection are part of church life and ministry. There are many ways to demonstrate affection while maintaining positive and safe boundaries with children and youth.

Some positive and appropriate forms of affection are listed below:

- Brief hugs. Preferred hugs are side-to-side hugs, one-arm hugs and a-frame hugs.
- Pats on the shoulder or back
- Handshakes
- "High-Fives" and hand slapping
- Verbal praise
- Touching hands, faces, shoulders and arms of children or youth
- Arms around shoulders
- Holding hands while walking with small children
- Sitting beside small children
- Kneeling or bending down for huddles with small children
- Holding hands during prayer
- Pats on the head when culturally appropriate (for example, this gesture should typically be avoided in some Asian communities.)

The following forms of affection are considered inappropriate with children and youth in ministry settings because many of them are the behaviors that child molesters use to groom children or youth and their parents for later molestation or can be, in and of themselves, sexual abuse. The determination of the relative appropriateness of these behaviors will be at the discretion of the direct supervisor.

- Inappropriate or lengthy embraces
- Kisses on the mouth
- Holding children over three years old on the lap, without allowing child to come and go on their own

- Any sexualized touching; touching bottoms, chests or genital areas other than for appropriate diapering or toileting of infants and toddlers
- Showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, staff-only areas or other private rooms
- Occupying a bed with a child or youth
- Touching knees or legs of children or youth
- Wrestling with children or youth
- Tickling children or youth
- Piggyback rides
- Any type of massage given by a child or youth to an adult
- Any type of massage given by an adult to a child or youth
- Any form of unwanted affection or physical contact
- Comments or compliments (spoken, written or electronic) that relate to physique or body development. Examples would be, “You sure are developing,” or “You look really hot in those jeans”
- Snapping bras or giving ‘wedgies’ or similar touch of underwear
- Giving inappropriate gifts or money to individual children or youth
- Private meals with individual children or youth, not in a public predetermined location
- Private email or written communications with children or youth outside the context of our ministries
- Private scheduled meetings, outings or events just with child or youth outside the context of our ministries

Other Inappropriate Behaviors

Inappropriate behaviors and interactions can be detected and stopped. Some behavior may be inherently harmful to children or youth or are the types used by child molesters to groom children, youth and their parents or may create the conditions where abuse can occur more easily. Furthermore, some behaviors and interactions are potentially harmful to children or youth in and of themselves. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Using, possessing, distributing or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or the misuse of legal drugs while serving as sponsors, participating or assisting with programs or activities specifically for children or youth.
- Dating or becoming romantically involved with a child or youth.
- Having sexual contact with a child or youth.
- Youth or children left unsupervised or given an inappropriate amount of responsibility.

- Adults sharing inappropriate jokes, stories or personal confessions with children or youth. This includes conversations about their own sexual activities, dreams and fantasies or discussing their use of sexually oriented or explicit materials such as pornography, videos or materials on or from the Internet with children or youth.
- Dancing, games, skits or jokes that make fun of a person's gender, ethnicity, socio-economic reality or sexual orientation.
- Possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing, etc.) on church property or in the presence of children or youth except as expressly permitted as part of a pre-authorized educational program.
- Using the Internet to view or download any sexually oriented materials on church property or in the presence of children or youth.
- Giving gifts or sending special or private emails or other communications to only certain children/youth outside of an appropriate mentoring relationship.
- Transporting children or youth alone without prior parental consent.
- Leaving one adult alone with one child or youth at any time without prior parental consent. (Even when waiting for a parent who is running late to pick up the child or youth.) (See Two Adult Rule, page 7)
- Asking a youth to transport another youth or child. (Youth transporting youth should only be done with parental permission.)
- Adults meeting alone with a youth or child in a private location, including a SPARK room, a home, hotel room or cabin.
- Programs for infants and children under six years old should have procedures to ensure that children are released only to their parents or legal guardians or those designated by them.
- Sleeping in the same bed, sleeping bags, tents, hotel rooms or other rooms with children or youth unless the adult is an immediate family member of all children or youth in the tent, hotel room or other room. It is preferred that even immediate family members have their own rooms. It is acceptable to have multiple adults sleeping with multiple children or youth participating in one open space such as a church basement or camp lodge.
- Dressing, undressing, bathing or showering in the presence of children or youth unless unavoidable.
- Using physical punishment in any way for behavior management of children and youth. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting or any other physical force. Physical force may only be used to stop a behavior that may cause immediate harm to the individual or to a child, youth or others.
- Using harsh language, degrading punishment or mechanical restraint such as rope or tape for behavior management.

- Participating in or allowing others to conduct any hazing activities relating to children or youth ministry or camp activities.

MONITORING AND SUPERVISION OF PROGRAMS

The monitoring and supervision of programs and activities involving children or youth is important for safeguarding children and youth and involves several aspects. Structural guidelines or standards for the programs and activities for children and youth can provide a system for managing this supervision. These include such things as clarity on who approves new programs, how many adults need to be present and the like. In addition to setting structural guidelines, the church leaders should make sure the guidelines are followed. Programs and activities have to be monitored and supervised to do that.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- Every program for children and youth should have established ratios) for adults and children (1:6 is recommended). Compliance with these established ratios is required at all times, including activities that occur off church premises. When both boys and girls are participating, male and female adult presence is preferred.
- Existing programs (more than two years old) should be monitored for safety so that there is no assumption that care is taken to supervise programs as leadership is handed from one person or team to another over time.
- Church Personnel should not be alone with a child or youth or multiple children or youth where other adults cannot easily observe them. This includes hotel rooms, classrooms, offices, etc. One-to-one conversations with children or youth should be held in an open or public or other place where private conversations are possible but occur in full view of others.
- Church Personnel over the age of 21 should directly supervise Church Personnel under the age of 18 and be physically present during all activities. This includes day camps, youth gatherings, outdoor ministry events, field trips, etc.
- Church Personnel should develop new programs for children and youth within the vision, mission and values of our congregation. Development of new activities should include plans to provide and adhere to this Child Protection Policy for children or youth.
- Each program will consider age-appropriate procedures to ensure the safety of children and youth using restrooms and showers or baths.
- When supervising or assisting private activities such as dressing, showering or diapering infants or children, Church Personnel should remain in an area observable by other adults or work in pairs.
- Signed Participant Forms (see Appendix A: Participant Form) (including emergency contact information and consent for treatment) should be required for all activities.

ACTION PLANS

Consequences

Any violation of this policy may result in removal of supervisory responsibilities and/or involvement with children and youth ministries. Employed staff may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Anyone in violation may be subject to criminal prosecution.

Confidentiality

When a youth asks if you can keep a secret, you should tell them that you are not able to make that commitment. Assure them that you care about them and that you want to hear what they have to say. This includes abuse, suicide threats or information regarding crimes.

Action Plan for the Witness When Abuse is Suspected

1. Document your concerns (Appendix C: Incident Report Form).
2. Share concerns with supervisor, pastor or Administrator.
3. Report suspected abuse to legal authorities (as documented in Appendix G: Guidelines for Calling the Child Abuse Hotline).
4. Continue to love and support the child or youth and seek to have appropriate follow up care by you or others in church.
5. Work in coordination with a partner church to provide pastoral support for “alleged abuser.”

Action Plan for Known Sexual & Physical Abuse

1. Give affirmation and hope by praising the child or youth for having the courage to come forward. Give hope through your willingness to listen, understand and care for the child or youth.
2. Give assurance by saying things like “I love you and I will accept you no matter what.” “God loves you no matter what.” “You can be totally honest.” “Please don’t be afraid to tell the whole story.” “Don’t be afraid to admit your fears or present your perspective.” “I promise to listen and to do everything I can to understand you and help you.” (Only say this if you intend to follow through.)
3. Assist the child or youth in facing the Issue. Assuming this is a sexual abuse issue, the conversation needs to be heard by more than one Church Personnel, if possible. Encourage the child or youth to talk with another adult, preferably of the same gender. This is for your protection, as well as the child or youth, if questions of further sexual abuse arise.

4. It is important for the child or youth to understand they have been abused. Even if the child entered the relationship willingly, a sexual relationship between an adult and a child or youth is abusive.
5. Encourage the child or youth to get professional help. Assist them or have someone in the church assist them in connecting with a professional counselor. Work with a parent or parents/guardians to make a plan for recovery. If they are in immediate harm in their home, assist them in temporary shelter.
6. Acknowledge your responsibility to document the abuse and to share this information with the authorities.
7. Continue to be part of the healing of the child or youth as appropriate.

REPORTING INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR: POLICY VIOLATIONS OR ABUSE

1. When Church Personnel observe any inappropriate behaviors or behaviors that are inconsistent with this policy they should promptly report their observations. (See Appendix H: Incident Response Plan for information on a timeline for who and how promptly reports are to be made.)
2. Such inappropriate behaviors or possible policy violations that relate to interactions with children or youth should be reported in one of the following ways:
 - a. A telephone call, email or meeting with the immediate supervisor of that person,
 - b. A telephone call, email or meeting with the Pastor or Administrator,
 - c. A telephone call, email or meeting with the Congregation Council President,
 - d. A telephone call, meeting or email to the Synod Bishop or Assistants to the Bishop.
3. All reports of inappropriate behavior or policy violations with children or youth need to be taken seriously.

Reporting Abuse

1. Church Personnel may be legally required to report known or suspected abuse of children or youth to the appropriate state authorities. Ordained pastors are mandatory reporters. (See Appendix A for more information on how, when and where to report suspected abuse.)
2. Failure to report suspected abuse of children or youth may be a crime. Reports may be made confidentially or anonymously. Every state provides immunity from civil liability for persons required to report suspected abuse in good faith and without malice. Simply stated, "in good faith" means that the person submitting the report believes what he or she is reporting to be true.
3. In addition to reporting to the state authorities, Church Personnel are to report any suspected or known abuse of children or youth that may have been perpetrated by Church Personnel directly to the Pastor and Congregation Council President so that immediate and proper steps may be taken to ensure the safety of alleged victims.
4. Reports of suspected or known abuse that involve rostered Church Personnel should be reported to the Bishop or Assistants to the Bishop through a telephone call or meeting.
5. A Response Team may be formed consisting of: Bishop and/or delegate, Legal Counsel, Congregation Council President, Senior Pastor and any additional members as needed.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANT FORMS

INCARNATION LUTHERAN CHURCH EVENT PERMISSION SLIP FOR MINOR

Event Name: _____ Date of Event: _____

Student's Last Name _____ First Name _____ Middle Name _____

Grade _____ Sex _____ Age _____ Home Phone (_____) _____

Home Address _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Allergies/Health Concerns:

Please list any medications the event participant is currently using:

Parents/Guardian _____ Home Phone (_____) _____

Cell Phone (_____) _____

Emergency Name _____ Phone (_____) _____

Physician/Clinic _____ Address _____

Phone (_____) _____

Health Insurance Carrier _____ Group # _____ Member # _____

Incarnation Lutheran Church (ILC) wishes to provide all youth with loving, fun and safe environments in which to explore their faith. It has always been this church's policy that no youth may bring any illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, weapons or other inappropriate materials on youth events. It has also been our policy that should any youth be found with such items in their possession while on a youth event, they would be subject to immediate disciplinary action, which may include being sent home at the parents/guardians expense.

In order to effectively carry out these policies, if there is reasonable suspicion that a youth has in his/her possession illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, weapons or other inappropriate materials, the staff and/or leaders of ILC will take appropriate measures to enforce the above stated policies, which may include searching luggage and/or other personal items. This will be done in the presence of one other adult and the youth and will only be carried out if there is reasonable suspicion that such items are present.

I, the legal parent/guardian, do hereby give permission for the staff and/or leaders of Incarnation Lutheran Church to carry out the actions outlined above. I understand that this policy is in place to ensure a healthy environment for all youth and that this will only be carried out if deemed absolutely necessary.

My child has permission to attend and be transported to and from the above-named event. In case of an emergency, I understand every effort will be made to contact parents/guardian or the emergency name listed above. In the event none of the above can be reached, I hereby give permission to the physician selected by the staff and/or leaders of Incarnation Lutheran Church to hospitalize, secure proper treatment for and to order injection, anesthesia or surgery for my child as named above. I hereby release ILC and its trip organizers, officers, directors, agents, employees and affiliated organizations from and against any and all liability arising out of or in any way connected with, my child's participation in this ILC event, including any liability for negligence (but not reckless, willful or fraudulent misconduct).

I hereby give permission that my child, while attending this Incarnation Lutheran Church event, may be photographed or videotaped and my child's image and voice may be used at a later date to promote future events. Any questions, please contact the staff person in charge of the event.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____



Incarnation Lutheran Church

Minor Participation Authorization

and Consent to Emergency Medical Treatment Form

I, the undersigned, certify that I am the parent or legal guardian of _____ (hereafter the "minor child").

I hereby give my consent to have my minor child participate in the following activity of Incarnation Lutheran Church _____.

I recognize that there are risks involved in participating in this activity and hereby assume all risk of injury, harm, damage, or death to my minor child in connection with his/her participation in this activity.

To the fullest extent permitted by law, I release Incarnation Lutheran Church, its trustees, officers, directors, employees, agents and representatives from any injury, harm, damage or death which may occur to my minor child while participating in the activity and agree to save and hold harmless Incarnation Lutheran Church, its trustees, officers, directors, employees, agents and representatives from any claims arising out of my minor child's participation in the activity.

Further, being the parent or legal guardian of the minor child, I do consent to any medical, surgical, x-ray, anesthetic, or dental treatment that may be deemed necessary for my minor child. I understand that efforts will be made to contact me prior to treatment but, in the event I cannot be reached in an emergency, I give permission to the activity leader to make the decisions necessary for treatment. Should there be no activity leader available, I give permission to the attending physician to treat my minor child. As parent or legal guardian, I understand that I am responsible for the health care decisions of my minor child and agree that my insurance plan is the primary plan to pay for the medical, dental, or hospital care or treatment that is given to my minor child. Any insurance policy of the church or organization sponsoring this event will be used as the secondary coverage.

Executed this _____ day of _____, 20__.

Signature _____

Printed Name _____

Witness: _____

Witness: _____

APPENDIX B: INCARNATION GUIDELINES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Restroom Guidelines

For the protection of all, children should never be alone in a bathroom with the door closed and never be in a closed bathroom stall with an adult or youth helper. Parents are strongly encouraged to have their children visit the bathroom prior to each class.

If a child needs to use the bathroom:

- Travel as a group
- Do not take a child into the bathroom alone
- Volunteers should remain outside the bathroom
- If the child seems to be taking longer than seems necessary, open the bathroom door and call the child's name.
- If a child requires assistance, prop the door open and leave the stall door open while assisting the child
- Children over the age of 7 should travel to the bathroom with a same gender buddy.

Incarnation's Bullying Policy

Incarnation Lutheran Church (Incarnation) seeks to provide a safe, fun and faith filled experience for all people who participate in worship and ministry here. Therefore, bullying is not tolerated on the Incarnation campus or at any Incarnation events regardless of location. Incarnation seeks to create a welcoming culture and a safe space for all people to grow in the love and knowledge of Jesus Christ. Incarnation also believes that adults in the church have a responsibility to model for younger generations Christ-like conflict resolution skills and ways to hold each other accountable for their behavior.

Incarnation staff and key adult volunteers will be trained on the specifics of this bullying policy as part of their preparation in working with children and youth.

Course of Action for Bully, Victim and Bystanders:

When a bullying incident occurs at Incarnation, the first step of consequence or course of action will depend on the severity of the incident and will be determined by the appropriate Incarnation staff.

Incarnation's bullying course of action is as follows but not limited to:

General Consequences and Course of Action for the Bully:

1. The individual(s) will be taken aside immediately with the appropriate Incarnation staff to effectively communicate the unacceptable behavior and to discuss the consequences of continued behavior with the individual.
 - a. Bullies need to know that their actions must stop immediately and that it will not be tolerated any longer.
 - b. Bullying hurts all those involved, even themselves.
 - c. Bullying may cause you to lose friends.
 - d. Bullying isn't a way to treat others with respect which every child deserves.
 - e. Ask an adult you trust if you feel angry or upset or don't know how to stop your actions.
2. The individual(s) will meet with an Incarnation pastor or staff member immediately to discuss parental involvement, change of group configuration, loss of privileges or other appropriate courses of action.
3. Parents will be immediately contacted about their son or daughter's behavior.
4. The individual will be sent home because of conduct detrimental to others and themselves.

General Course of Action for the Victim:

The individual(s) will be taken aside immediately with the appropriate Incarnation staff to

1. Effectively listen and offer support. The victims must know that adults care for them outside the initial intervention.
2. The individual(s) will meet with the appropriate Incarnation staff to help the victim develop strategies for addressing the problem, should it reoccur in the future.
 - a. Victims need to know they are not responsible for the bully's behavior and it isn't their fault.
 - b. Victims need to know they should not respond to bullies by giving in, getting upset or fighting back, which will most likely just encourage more bullying. Staying calm but assertive, is a great way to combat bullying.
 - c. Walking away or no response can be a good tactic. It gives less attention to the bully that they are seeking.
 - d. Victims always need to be encouraged to seek help from a trusted adult.
3. Parents will be immediately contacted about the experience their son or daughter has endured. Parents will have a chance to talk with their child to offer any support or advice to their child. Incarnation will fully respect and support parental wishes for their child during the process.

General Communication and Course of Action with Bystanders:

1. The individual(s) will meet with the appropriate Incarnation staff who will listen and offer support for what they experienced. For possible reoccurring or future incidents, bystanders need to know the following:

- a. Bystanders need to know their involvement makes a huge difference. They should not just sit and watch.
- b. Stand up for the person being bullied if you are in a safe environment. Use phrases such as “stop teasing,” “quit fighting,” “that’s not funny,” etc.
- c. Don’t join in. Don’t laugh or participate in any teasing or harassing that was going on. This will only encourage the situation and make it worse. Also, encourage other bystanders to not join in as well; this will only help the victim.
- d. Get help from an adult. Reporting bullying isn’t a bad thing.
- e. After a bullying incident offer sympathy for the victim and encourage the victim to talk to an adult or even offer to go with.
- f. Overall, be a good friend. Offer to include the victim in activities, etc.

Bullying Prevention and Management Plan

Immediate procedures when bullying is suspected: If you as an Incarnation staff member or adult volunteer have witnessed or heard of an incident that involves bullying, the following practices and techniques will help you provide a safe environment for youth participants, volunteers, other staff and yourself. Other program staff members are great resources to consult if you have any concerns or questions in regards to identifying bullying or the best course of action for each case.

Immediate intervention – When nothing is done, bullying becomes acceptable to all those experiencing it.

If you as a staff member or volunteer ignore an incident you saw or heard, the problem may only get worse and your kids will not believe they can trust you. Your kids need to believe that you understand them, care for them and that you can help. If you don’t intervene immediately, why would other kids stand up?

Even if you are not sure actions you have witnessed fall under bullying behavior, immediate intervention is still important. Even if it isn’t bullying, aggressive behaviors need to be stopped. As Incarnation staff and volunteers, you may not be able to prevent everything but you can respond quickly to prevent the effects of bullying from going further.

Do not expect or ask children or youth to work things out for themselves. Bullying is different from a normal argument or conflict. Bullying involves a power imbalance that requires your immediate intervention.

Physical Separation or Time out – If you as a staff member or volunteer witness bullying in the act, immediately separate those involved. Stand between or near the victim and the bully, separating them, so as to stop any continued bullying, intimidation or physical harm. This may also be a time for young children to be removed from the environment they are in.

Verbal description and response – After immediate intervention, make sure that you explain the unacceptable behavior you observed and that the seriousness of the situation is conveyed to all those involved. Response needs to be firm and appropriate for the situation but at all times volunteer or staff member must remain calm. The volunteer or staff member must make sure the bully or bullies know the behavior must stop immediately.

Do not respond aggressively. Using aggressive behavior as a volunteer or staff member sends the wrong message to those involved. Aggressive behavior may also prompt a bully or bystander to increase his or her bullying behavior or even become aggressive towards you.

Avoid lecturing the bully in front of his or her peers. For most situations it is best to take the individual aside and solve the issue but by giving the bully attention in front of his or her peers, you may be giving the bully what he or she wants. The goal is to end the behavior, not to humiliate anyone.

Consider the consequences – After any incident that needs consequences, the appropriate staff person will designate the appropriate consequences in consultation with those involved and with pastoral involvement as necessary. The general course of action for both the bully and the victim will be determined by those individuals.

Compliment and praise – Give praise and appreciation to those who were helpful in the process. If there were kids in your small group/class that helped inform you of bullying or if they were specifically helpful to the victim, make sure you positively reinforce their behavior.

Stay present – Your presence can be the only thing that prevents a bully from continued behavior. Especially when an incident occurs, remain in the area until you are absolutely sure the behavior has stopped.

Report the incident – If you are a volunteer, report the incident to a staff person responsible for the ministry. At this point a detailed record of the incident will be made using Appendix C: Incident Report Form.

Follow up with all involved – You will need to rely on your connection and relationships that you have built with those involved to get them to talk openly and productively about the incident and its effects and consequences for both sides.

APPENDIX C: INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Incident Report Form

Instructions

Complete this report under any of the following situations:

- A. A child becomes ill or receives an injury that requires First Aid or medical treatment while in your care;
- B. A child receives a bump or blow to the head or other visible injury regardless of treatment;
- C. A child is transported by ambulance from your facility;
- D. An unusual or unexpected incident occurs that jeopardizes the safety of a child, such as a child left unattended, there is a vehicle accident (with or without injuries), or a child is exposed to a threatening person or situation;
- E. There is an allegation or reasonable suspicion of abuse of a child. Important: Consult your state's mandatory reporting requirements for further information on abuse reporting; OR
- F. As otherwise required by any state licensing or other authority, such as childcare or daycare licensing.

Date of Incident:	Time of Incident:
Name and Approximate Age of Child Involved (One Report per Child):	
Contact Information for Child Involved:	
Parent/Guardian: _____	
Address: _____	
Telephone: _____ Email: _____	
Nature of Injury/Incident:	

Location of Incident:

Description of Incident:

Was the above information:

Reported to you by someone else? If so, who: _____

OR

Directly observed/witnessed by you?

Action(s) Taken: (Check all that apply.)

Provided First Aid What/When: _____

Call placed to 911 By Whom: _____

Taken to hospital By Whom: _____

Notified Parent/Guardian Who/When: _____

Notified Church Official Who/When: _____

Notified Authorities Who/When: _____

Other: _____

Witnesses to Incident:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Incident Report

Printed Name of Person Completing This Report:

Position at the Organization: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Church Official: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX D: ADULT VOLUNTEER INFORMATION FORM

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Email: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

How long have you been a member/participant of Incarnation Lutheran Church? _____

Occupation (if employed):

Employer (if applicable):

Previous Volunteer Experience:

Special interest, hobbies and skills:

Can you make a one-year commitment to this volunteer role? _____

Do you have a valid Driver's License? _____ Any Restrictions? _____

Do you have vehicle Liability Insurance? _____

If so are you willing to provide a copy of your coverage for the files? _____

Why would you like to volunteer as a worker with children and/or youth?

What qualities do you have that would help you work with children and/or youth?

What training have you received in the care and nurture of children and youth?

In caring for children and youth, we believe it is our responsibility to seek adult staff that is able to provide healthy, safe and nurturing relationship. Please answer the following questions accordingly. Answering yes to any questions will not automatically disqualify a volunteer from working with children. Any special concerns can be discussed individually with the pastoral staff.

Have you ever been convicted of or pled guilty to a crime, either a misdemeanor or a felony (including but not limited to drug-related charges, child abuse, other crimes of violence, theft or motor vehicle violations)? ____ Yes ____ No.

If yes, please explain:

Your response to the following question is optional:

Have you had an experience in your life that you feel would impede your volunteer work with children and youth? ____ Yes ____ No

If so, do you feel comfortable explaining? ____ Yes ____ No

Would you like to speak to the pastor regarding this experience? ____ Yes ____ No

Would you be available for periodic volunteer training? ____ Yes ____ No

References:

Please list two personal references (people who are not related to you by blood or marriage) and provide a complete address and phone information for each.

1) Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Relationship to Volunteer: _____

2) Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Relationship to Volunteer: _____

If you have volunteered with us in the past 3 years, have you been convicted of any felonies, child abuse or added to the sex offender registry during this time? ____ Yes ____ No

Signature of Volunteer:

Date:

APPENDIX E: VOLUNTEER COVENANT FORM

The Congregation of Incarnation Lutheran Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church. The following policy statements reflect our congregation's commitment to preserving this church as a sanctuary for all who would enter and as a place in which all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others.

In keeping with the covenant of baptism, we have committed ourselves and our resources to the nurturing of our children. We understand that children and youth cannot grow in faith and in wisdom when they are frightened, distrustful, anxious or depressed. They cannot learn to love and trust God when those who represent God to them are unloving and untrustworthy. We promise our children and youth that we will provide the structure, education and the policies that will keep them safe from harm and abuse. In that context, we will screen volunteers, train them and ask that they abide by the policies of our church.

As a volunteer working with children in this congregation, I agree to observe and abide by all church policies regarding working in ministries with children and youth, to observe the "Two Adult Rule" at all times, to participate in training and education events provided by the church related to my volunteer assignment and to report promptly abusive or inappropriate behavior to the church staff or church member who supervises my work.

Signature of Volunteer

Print Full Name

Date

APPLICANT'S STATEMENT

The information contained in this screening application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references or churches listed in this application to give information or opinions that they may have regarding my character and fitness for work with children and youth. In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of the application by Incarnation Lutheran Church, I release 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 for release of requested information.

I have received and read policies and procedures of Incarnation Lutheran Church regarding working with children and youth. If my application is accepted I will abide by them and act with Christian conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of the church.

Applicant's signature: _____ Date: _____

AUTHORIZATION FOR BACKGROUND RECORDS CHECK

I have been informed that the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension may be asked to conduct a background records check on me under the Minnesota Statutes Chapter 299C.62. I understand that I may be the subject of this background records check for purposes of my volunteering or employment to determine whether I have been arrested or convicted of any crime defined under the background check act (Minnesota Statutes Chapter 299C.62).

I understand I have the right to be informed of the response to the request for a background records check and to obtain a copy of the report or any record that forms the basis of the report from the requesting party. I understand I have the right to challenge the accuracy and completeness of any information contained in the report or record under the relevant information provisions of the Data Practices Act.

I understand I have the right to be informed by Incarnation Lutheran Church if my application has been denied because of the report received from the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension and that I will not be required directly or indirectly to pay the cost of the background records check.

I understand my rights listed above and agree to a background records check.

Applicant's signature: _____ Date _____

Print full Name: _____

APPENDIX G: GUIDELINES FOR CALLING THE CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE

Mandated reporters are required and other persons may call the Hotline when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected. The Hotline worker will determine if the information given by the reporter meets the legal requirements to initiate an investigation.

Criteria needed for a child abuse or neglect investigation

- The alleged victim is a child under the age of 18.
- The alleged perpetrator is a parent, guardian, foster parent, relative caregiver, paramour or any individual residing in the same home or any person responsible for the child's welfare at the time of the alleged abuse or neglect.
- There is a specific incident of abuse or neglect whether the perpetrator is an adult or a minor or a specific set of circumstances involving suspected abuse or neglect.
- There is demonstrated harm to the child or a substantial risk of physical or sexual injury to the child.

Information the reporter should have ready to give to the Hotline

- Names, birth dates (or approximate ages), races, genders, etc. for all adult and child subjects.
- Addresses for all victims and perpetrators, including current location.
- Information about the siblings or other family members, if available.
- Specific information about the abusive incident or the circumstances contributing to risk of harm—for example, when the incident occurred, the extent of the injuries, how the child says it happened and any other pertinent information.

If this information is not readily available, the reporter should not delay a call to the hotline.

Ramsey County Human Services Child Abuse Hotline

651-266-4500

The Hotline operates 24 hours per day, 365 days a year. The Hotline is less busy in the early morning hours and reporters may be able to get through more quickly during these times. Reporters should be prepared to provide phone numbers where they may be reached throughout the day in case the Hotline must call back for more information.

If the abuse occurred outside of Ramsey County, you would report to that appropriate county's child abuse hotline. If the ministry opportunity is organized by a third party the reporter should alert their supervising staff.

APPENDIX H: INCIDENT RESPONSE PLAN

Incident Response Plan from the Incarnation Lutheran Church Child Protection Policy

	Task	Responsible Party
Day 1	Witness fills out incident report form	Report form is shared with the Administrator or Senior Pastor if the Administrator is identified in the report.
	State Agency is contacted	The witness and a member of the Pastoral Staff.
	Legal Counsel is contacted	Administrator (Senior Pastor if the administrator is identified in the report) contacts Legal Counsel to notify them of incident.
	Parent or Guardian Notification	Senior Pastor (Associate Pastor if the Senior Pastor is identified in the report), Administrator and/or person making the report will contact parent or guardian of the child or youth involved.
	Response Team Developed	Administrator develops an immediate response team consisting of appropriate Congregation Council, staff, parents and/or members of the congregation.
	If abuse is on church property or staff members are cited	Written report to Synod Sexual Misconduct Response Coordination Team will be done by Administrator or Senior Pastor if the Administrator is identified in the report Administrator will send a copy of the report to the Counsel President (or Vice President of the Congregation Council if the Congregation Council President is identified in the report).
Day 2	Prepare communication to Congregation	Administrator (or Senior Pastor if the Administrator is identified in the report) will work with Legal Advisor to create a statement the will be emailed and sent through the USPS to all active participants in the Incarnation Faith Community.
	Prepare communication to local community churches if Legal Counsel recommends	Administrator or Senior Pastor if the Administrator is identified in the report will work with Legal Advisor to create a statement that will be emailed to the churches in the local community.
	Contact media as needed	Legal Counsel in coordination with Response Team addresses and composes official response.

