



Child Protection Policies and Procedures for Children and Youth Ministries

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Table of Contents

I.	Children Protection Policy.....	pages 3-6
II.	Code of Conduct	pages 7-11
III.	Abuse and Reporting Protocol	pages 12-14
IV.	Procedures for Working with Children’s and Youth Ministry	pages 15-26
	1. Definitions	
	2. Screening and Eligibility for Service	
	3. Training	
	4. Staffing and Classroom Supervision	
	5. Discipline and Classroom Management	
	6. Health	
	7. Special Concern in Children’s Ministry	
	8.. Childcare for Church-Sponsored Events	
	9. Safety and Security	
	10. Special Concerns in Youth Ministry	
	11. Field Trips/Overnight Events	
	12. Transportation Policy	
V.	Applications and Forms.....	pages 27-44
	1. Ministry Volunteer Form	
	2. Student Helper Form	
	3. Background Check Permission Form	
	4. Code of Conduct Acknowledgement Form	
	5. Knowledge of Suspected Child Abuse Form	
	6. Boundary Violation Report Form	
	7. Accident Report Form	
	8. A Note from Grace Kids	
	9. Child Registration Form	
	10. Participation Agreement and Waiver of Liability	
	11. Driver Vehicle Information Form	

I. Child Protection Policy

A. Biblical Foundation

- ◇ Our God is a God of light. We are called to walk in his ways as his children of light.

John 12:35–6 “So Jesus said to them, The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.”

1 John 1:5 “This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.”

Ephesians 5:8–9 “For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true).”

- ◇ Children are special in God’s sight. They are a precious gift, made in God’s own image. Jesus rebuked his disciples in righteous anger when they tried to prevent children from coming to him. Jesus welcomes children and gives them a central place in his kingdom.

Genesis 1:27 “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”

Psalms 127:3 “Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward.”

Mark 10:13–14 “And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, ‘Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God.’”

- ◇ God hears the prayers of children who are abused. Some of Jesus’ harshest words were reserved for those who would cause a child to stumble.

Exodus 22:21–24 “You shall not wrong a sojourner or oppress him, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. You shall not mistreat any widow or fatherless child. If you do mistreat them, and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry, and my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless.”

Psalms 10:17–18 “O Lord, you hear the desire of the afflicted; you will strengthen their heart; you will incline your ear to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, so that man who is of the earth may strike terror no more.”

Matthew 18:5–6 *“Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.”*

B. Faithful Protection

- ◇ Children are valued by God, but are spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally, and morally vulnerable. God hates the oppression of the vulnerable. God recognizes the temptation for the powerful to use their power for the exploitation of the weak and condemns anyone who would thus abuse their power.

Deuteronomy 10:17–19 *“For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.”*

Psalms 9:9 *“The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.”*

Luke 4:18–19 *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”*

- ◇ As his redeemed image bearers, his children of light, God calls us to speak up and use our power for the protection of the vulnerable. When we intervene on behalf of the vulnerable, we are reflecting the moral beauty of our God. When we remain silent or we abuse power by harming the vulnerable, we are denying the glorious moral purity of God. This is why the abuse of power is so personal to God.

Leviticus 19:13–15 *“You shall not oppress your neighbor or rob him. The wages of a hired servant shall not remain with you all night until the morning. You shall not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall fear your God: I am the Lord. You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor.”*

Job 29:11–17 *“When the ear heard, it called me blessed, and when the eye saw, it approved, because I delivered the poor who cried for help, and the fatherless who had none to help him. The blessing of him who was about to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my justice was like a robe and a turban. I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. I was a father to the needy, and I searched out the cause of him whom I did not know. I broke the fangs of the unrighteous and made him drop his prey from his teeth.”*

Proverbs 31:8–9 *“Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.”*

Ecclesiastes 4:1 "Again I saw all the oppressions that are done under the sun. And behold, the tears of the oppressed, and they had no one to comfort them! On the side of their oppressors there was power, and there was no one to comfort them."

Isaiah 1:16–17 "Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause."

James 1:27 "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world."

C. Core Beliefs

Promote, Protect, Prevent and Respond

- We believe in **promoting** healthy relationships between adults and children.
- We believe that **protecting** children is an adult's responsibility.
- We believe in **preventing and responding** to abuse with training and accountability.

D. Guiding Principles

The following principles guide our child protection plan, policies, and procedures. They flow from the biblical foundation and our core beliefs.

- **An intergenerational church is God's covenant plan.** Grace Presbyterian Church highly values the role that loving, godly adults have in discipling and nurturing children and how children bless adults in the church. Our congregation vows, at a covenant child's baptism, to "undertake the responsibility of assisting the parents in the Christian nurture of this child." (Presbyterian Church of America, Book of Church Order 56-5)
- **Protecting children honors Christ.** Jesus holds Grace Presbyterian Church accountable for protecting our children and calls us to follow his lead in loving children. Therefore, good policies, procedures, systems, and structures facilitate mutual accountability as we submit to Christ.
- **We must proactively work to protect children.** Preventing and responding to child abuse takes a heavy investment of time, money, and resources. However, the spiritual, emotional, physical, and financial toll of child abuse is far greater if passively allowed.
- **Up-to-date child protection is in everyone's best interest.** Churches that practice good child protection procedures protect children as well as adults who serve children because training and accountability will build trust among parents, volunteers, and church staff.
- **Child protection requires humility.** As Christians, we confess our spiritual brokenness and sin, and therefore, we must all humbly submit to boundaries established around children. Moreover, those who have committed child sexual abuse and other crimes against children will not be allowed to serve with children.

- **The church is a place for sinners.** We want to be a church that is safe for hurting, broken people to come and find grace, hope, and healing. Prioritizing child protection creates an environment of humility and accountability where such healing can take place.
- **First-rate protection.** Any setting where children are present may be sought out by those wishing to harm them. We aspire to be a place where parents walk in and sense that their children will be loved and safe. We also want to conform to the most up-to-date laws and research about child abuse and abuse prevention. In this way, Grace Presbyterian Church can be known as the safest place in our city for children.
- **Protecting every child:** For any child, eighteen and under. Grace Presbyterian Church's child protection plan applies to all church activities.

E. Key Commitments (Compare to Policy Adults Protecting Children)

- We have a zero-tolerance policy for child abuse.
- We report child sexual abuse to the civil authorities in a timely manner.
- All employees and volunteers will be screened according to the Child Protection Procedures of Grace Presbyterian Church.
- We do not employ anyone or allow anyone to volunteer who has been convicted of or has confessed to sexually abusing a child.
- Any employee or volunteer accused of sexually abusing a child will be immediately suspended from serving children and/or youth. We will do our best to ensure they have no access to children or youth in our church or in the community until we have clarity on the situation.
- Any employee or volunteer who does not abide by or help guard our child protection procedures and our code of conduct will not be allowed to work with children or youth.

II. Code of Conduct

Our goal is to protect the precious little ones that Jesus welcomes with open arms (Mark 10:14) Children are vulnerable and need protection. As adults is it our task to ensure the children are safe by abiding by the following code of conduct.

A. What is a Code of Conduct?

All staff and volunteers who work with children are expected to interact with children in a mature, capable, safe, caring, responsible manner, with a high level of accountability. This Code of Conduct describes how adults will interact with children and the boundaries they are expected to observe. This Code of Conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following expectations of staff and volunteers. By being vigilant in following the Code of Conduct, we will help protect children from abuse. The most effective way to reduce abuse of children is to be vigilant.

B. Accountability

All adult staff and volunteers are responsible for giving and accepting feedback from others in order to maintain our high level of professionalism. As an adult working with children, you agree to interact with the children by observing these principles. It is our expectation that you understand your responsibility to observe the interaction between adults and children and when you see interaction that is questionable, inappropriate, or crossing a child's boundaries, you will intervene on behalf of the child. Such intervention may include:

- Remaining present with the child in order to provide him/her a sense of security;
- Redirecting the child to join other children in a different area;
- Speaking to the adult and stating the boundary violation you have observed, and reminding them of the responsibility to abide by this code of conduct; or
- Speaking to the ministry director regarding your observation.

You also give permission to the other adults in our programs to take these intervening actions if you are seen crossing safe boundaries or violating this code of conduct.

C. Visibility

All work with children shall be planned and carried out in a way that minimizes risks as far as possible. This includes being visible to other adults when working with children. Adults shall not be in a room alone with a child with the door closed or in any area of our property that is secluded or hidden from view.

D. Isolation and Supervision

To protect our children, staff, and volunteers, at no time during a program may an adult be alone with a single child where others cannot observe the adult. We expect all adults to reduce isolation by having a minimum of two children present, informing the child's parent of any meeting you wish to have with the child, and doing it during a time and/or in a location where your interaction with the child is visible to others. Isolation could be overcome, for example, by taking two or more children to the bathroom together rather than only one, dropping off siblings last in a carpool, or taking your own child or spouse along when providing rides. We expect an adequate number of adults to supervise youth events, especially overnight activities.

When ministry to a child involves one-on-one contact, the following procedures shall be followed, as applicable:

- Always be accountable to other adults regarding your interactions with youth or children by informing the ministry leader and or parents when, where and for how long your one-on-one interaction will be.
- The activity must be in a public place that is visible to others, never in a private or secluded location, such as a room with the door closed or in a home alone with the child or student.
- Counseling or other necessarily confidential meetings with children shall be done in an office with a window in the door and only when another adult is in close vicinity, is aware that the meeting is occurring, and is willing to stay in the vicinity until it is completed; and
- Parents and/or supervisors are to be notified beforehand of any activities with youth or children.

In an emergency situation, find someone to go with you if at all possible, or notify any available adult.

Supervision reduces risk. Program administrators shall periodically and randomly inspect classrooms, offices, work areas, and other areas where children and adults are together.

E. Parent Involvement

Parents are responsible for knowing where their children are at all times. Therefore, parents shall be informed of planned activities. Parents shall be encouraged to make unannounced visits to program activities as a way of reducing isolation and monitoring the interaction between adults and children. After the children are released from worship or events, it is the parents' responsibility to ensure their child is supervised. Along with other adults, parents have a key role to play in their child's safety. Parents are encouraged to be educated regarding all procedures and the code of conduct.

F. Building Specific

Sunday School areas are restricted to teachers, parents of children, pastors, staff members, and children during the Sunday morning service, Sunday school classes, and Grace Kids activities. Adults who are not teaching are asked to use the restrooms in the front of the church. The office and upstairs restrooms should be reserved for children's use during worship and Sunday school. Children should not use the office and upstairs restrooms unless they are with a parent. Children, under 3rd grade, are not permitted to go to the storage area of the lower level without their parent. Children, under 5th grade, are not permitted to be unsupervised inside or outside on the grounds of the church building.

G. Rules Specific to Bathroom Use

Only female adults should assist **nursery, toddlers, and preschoolers** with bathroom needs. An exception is granted to a male family member of the child's household who is available to assist his preschool family member with his/her bathroom needs.

An adult is to screen the bathroom prior to use to make sure everything is in order. If a child is potty training, encourage the child to go on their own. When an adult is assisting a toddler or preschool child, the door is to remain open and the adult should remain outside to escort the child back when they are ready. If a child

is taking longer than seems necessary, the worker should make sure the bathroom door remains open and leave the stall door open as the child is assisted. An adult should never be alone with a child in a bathroom with the door closed. Likewise, a worker should never go into a bathroom stall with a child and shut the door. An adult should give the child as much privacy as possible.

Elementary children should be sent to the bathroom in groups of at least two if an adult is not available. If an elementary child needs assistance the policies for preschool must be adhered to.

H. Rules Specific to the Nursery

Small children are extremely vulnerable. We must ensure there is good visibility and adequate staff and volunteers to supervise the nursery. We encourage women to change diapers unless the man is the father of the child. When changing diapers, inform another nursery worker, and change the diaper quickly and with respect for the child. Diapers should only be changed in designated areas where we can maintain the boundaries of openness and observability.

I. Technology

Technology should be used appropriately to protect children or youth from abuse and exploitation. Volunteers and staff shall not engage in social networking, texting, or any other means of private communication with children and youth without the permission of the parents or guardian. All electronic communication must not be erased or deleted and made available for review upon request by the ministry leader or Pastor.

J. Discipline

Discipline should be used to teach and correct rather than punish. It should not include slapping, hitting, shaming, yelling at, or belittling a child. If there is a serious incident that requires discipline, it is always wise to involve the parent. However, parents are asked not to use corporal punishment with their own children at church events. Parents will be notified if their child has bitten or hit another child.

K. Touch

Because healthy, caring touch is valuable to children but unhealthy touch is abusive, the following guidelines apply:

- Touch shall be open rather than secretive.
- A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors.
- Touch should be in response to the need of the child and not the need of the adult.
- Touch should be age-appropriate and generally initiated by the child rather than the adult.
- It should be with the child's permission and any resistance from the child should be respected.
- Touch should always communicate respect for the child.

Adults should avoid doing things of a personal nature for children that they are able to do for themselves, including personal hygiene and bathroom breaks, dressing, bathing, etc.

Adults and other youth or children should not hit, slap, pinch, push, hold against their will, or otherwise assault children.

The following signs of affection are generally appropriate within specific contexts: verbal praise, side hugs, shoulder to shoulder hugs, pats on the shoulder, back, or head (when culturally appropriate). For smaller children: touching their hands, faces, shoulders and arms, arms around their shoulders, hugs, or holding them when others are present.

Appropriate sitting on laps may occur with younger children. Lap sitting with other children and youth is not appropriate. Rather, encourage them to sit next to you.

The following behaviors between staff or volunteers and children are inappropriate or may be perceived as inappropriate and shall not be engaged in: touching buttocks, chests, genital areas, or thighs; showing affection in isolated areas or when alone with a child; sleeping in bed with a child; inappropriate comments that relate to physique or body development; flirtatious or seductive looks; any form of affection that is unwanted by the child; showing sexually suggestive videos or playing sexually suggestive games with any child; any behavior that could be interpreted as sexual in nature.

Adult members shall monitor each other in the area of physical contact, helping each other by pointing out anything that could be misinterpreted.

L. Verbal Interaction

Words are a wonderful way to support and encourage a child. We must speak words that give life, such as praise, positive reinforcement, and speaking the truth in love. Inappropriate verbal interaction includes the following: shaming, belittling, humiliating, name calling, using harsh language that may frighten, threaten or humiliate the child, cursing, or making derogatory remarks about the child. Inappropriate verbal interaction also includes telling off-color or sexual jokes, making sexually suggestive comments, telling inappropriate secrets, or inappropriately discussing sexual encounters or desires with children.

M. Showing Favoritism

Adults shall avoid favoring or showing differential treatment to a particular child or youth to the exclusion of others. Adults shall not give gifts to any child or youth without requesting and receiving permission from that child or the youth's parent or legal guardian.

N. Reporting Boundary Violations

For the safety of all children in our care, we are all responsible to help ensure the boundaries set forth in this Code of Conduct are followed. The Bible commends those who have a teachable spirit and are open to correction (Proverbs 9:8; 13:18). Therefore, we must all pledge to remind each other if a boundary is being crossed.

Every boundary violation requires responsible action from adults. Our expectation is that you will intervene when a boundary is crossed. Working with children is a huge privilege and responsibility because our children are so valuable. *Those who are unwilling to guard proper boundaries cannot work with our children.*

When a boundary is crossed, kindly but firmly remind the person of the boundary and make sure the situation is safe. Then, fill out a *Boundary Violation Report* and submit it to the Director of Youth and Children's Ministries. If they are the violator, then send the report to the Senior Pastor.

All reports will be kept confidential. Cases where it would be appropriate would include but not be limited to: repeat boundary violations, an attitude of resistance to boundaries, and an especially dangerous boundary violation (such as an adult being all alone with a child in an isolated area). These can be difficult actions, but you must follow your conscience and our procedures. If something is not right, it is better to speak to someone about it.

Abusers are rarely caught in the act of abuse, but they are often caught crossing boundaries. We must see the signs and intervene.

O. Reporting of Abuse

When anyone has reason to suspect or has knowledge of child abuse within the scope of Grace Presbyterian Church's work and ministry, he or she must make a report according to our Reporting Protocol. See the Reporting Protocol below.

III. Abuse and Reporting Protocol

God has ordained civil authorities to be his servant. As God's servant, he gives civil authorities the power of the sword to punish those who do evil. God calls us to submit to these authorities as they carry out their God-ordained role to punish evil (Romans 13:1–7; I Peter 2:13–14).

A key aspect of our submission to the God-ordained civil authorities is to report the crime of child abuse. Child abuse is not only a sin, but a felony. Furthermore, our state's mandated reporting laws make it a crime to know about child abuse and refuse to report.

All volunteers and staff in our state are mandated reporters and legally responsible to report child abuse (Illinois DCFS website, 800-252-2873).

A. What Am I Required to Report?

All volunteers and staff at Grace Presbyterian Church are required by law and are encouraged by our leadership to report child abuse in the following circumstances:

- **Witness:** You witness or discover an act of abuse. In this situation, you must demonstrate courage. You must intervene and move the child to a safe place and call the authorities immediately. Then,

contact the Senior Pastor or Children’s Ministry Director and complete our “Knowledge of Suspected Child Abuse” form. The senior pastor can then ensure the perpetrator has no further access to children at the church and can initiate appropriate pastoral care for all parties.

- **Disclosure:** A child tells you of abuse they experienced. In this situation, remain calm and keep the child talking with open-ended questions rather than leading questions (for example, “What happened next? Can you tell me more?”) as long as the child feels comfortable. When the child has finished the disclosure, tell the child you believe them, it is not their fault, and you are going to help them. After the initial disclosure, do not try to conduct a lengthy interview, but as soon as is practical, while being sensitive to the child, call the authorities. Then, contact the senior pastor and complete our “Knowledge of Suspected Child Abuse” form.

Special Note: When there is a disclosure of abuse, no one, not even the parents or the pastor should conduct another interview of the child or conduct an internal investigation. The authorities or child advocacy center will have someone who is trained to conduct a child forensic interview. The more interviews the child has, the harder it is on the child and on those tasked with investigating and potentially prosecuting the crime.

- **Reasonable Cause:** You have reasonable cause to believe that child abuse has occurred. Reasonable cause does not require absolute proof. Instead, reasonable cause means one or more signs of child abuse are present. After reporting the reasonable cause, then contact the senior pastor or children's director and complete our “Knowledge of Suspected Child Abuse” form. Sometimes there are no visible signs of child sexual abuse, but common signs include:
 - Bleeding, bruising, pain or other signs of trauma around the genitalia (*please note when changing a diaper this is very different from a diaper rash*)
 - Child has a sexually transmitted disease
 - Sexual language and behavior that are not age-appropriate (*including promiscuous behavior*)
 - Repeated boundary violations by an adult or student volunteer (*e.g., you find an adult or student volunteer isolated with a child or pushing the limits of inappropriate touch, even after being warned not to do so*)
 - Emotional and behavioral signs such as: withdrawal, fear, depression, anger, or swings in behavior and mood
 - Difficulty sitting or walking without pain

B. Incident Response

When a report is made about suspected child abuse, all employees and volunteers of Grace Presbyterian Church are encouraged to cooperate fully with any legal investigation.

After contacting the authorities, all employees and volunteers at Grace Presbyterian Church should document their actions and knowledge with the “Knowledge of Suspected Child Abuse” form and turn the form into the church office in a sealed envelope.

Any adults who report suspected child abuse to the authorities should then contact Grace Presbyterian Church’s Senior Pastor or Children’s Ministry Director. The Senior Pastor will then initiate pastoral care for all parties and any disciplinary measures that may need to be taken. The senior pastor will also inform the head of the advisory team and/or trustee, the church’s legal representative, and the church’s insurance company. Any media inquiries should be directed to the senior pastor. In the event that the

senior pastor is personally involved in the incident, either as the accused or family of the victim, the Assistant/Associate Pastor will fulfill these duties.

After all the necessary reports have been made, Grace Presbyterian Church encourages everyone involved in the incident to use Biblical wisdom when speaking about it. While our church does not require strict confidentiality, we would ask anyone who reports to use their knowledge of the incident for a Godly purpose, speaking only of the incident in times and places that will help further protect children, aid investigators, or bring healing to all parties involved.

C. Follow Up-Internal Investigations

When suspected abuse is reported to the civil authorities and the suspected abuse occurred on Grace Presbyterian Church's property or ministry event, the youth and children's ministry staff members will perform an internal investigation of the incident. Without interfering with the civil authorities' investigation, youth and children's ministry staff members investigation will seek to discover the following:

- Did adults and volunteers follow all of our church's child protection policies?
- If not, what caused the failure to follow the policy?
- Is there an area of our child protection policies that should be altered so that such an incident will be less likely in the future?

If a report of child sexual abuse has been made, and the civil authorities do not file charges, the child protection committee shall conduct its own investigation in cooperation with the session to determine whether the person(s) involved shall be allowed to continue working with children. Just because civil authorities do not have enough evidence to file charges, this does not mean the person is exonerated completely or is well-suited to work with children. Any recommendations should be made to the senior pastor and advisory team for their final approval. Any powers of church discipline shall remain with the senior pastor; however, information and recommendations from the child protection committee will be given due consideration by the senior pastor and advisory team.

D. Boundary Violations

Grace Presbyterian Church takes any violations of our child protection plan very seriously. Abusers are rarely caught in the act of harming a child, but they're often seen breaking the rules and crossing boundaries. Every incident of boundary and rule violation does not necessarily signal that child abuse has occurred. However, every incident of boundary violation requires responsible action to ensure children's safety.

Adults and student volunteers should intervene when they see anyone breaking the child protection plan, ensure all children are safe, and remind the violator of appropriate behavior around children. Adults and student volunteers should also fill out a "Boundary Violation Report" in the following circumstances: when an adult or student volunteer is found in an isolated area with a child or when an adult or student volunteer observes a repeated boundary violation by the same person. *(Please note that any abuse should be stopped and then immediately reported. This only applies to boundary violations.)*

Boundary violations that require intervention include but are not limited to:

- If an adult or student volunteer is in an isolated area with a child, then remind them that this is unsafe and against the church’s child protection plan. Bring the child out of the isolated area and return the child to his or her parents and inform them of the situation. Also fill out a “Boundary Violation Report.”
- If an adult or student volunteer raises their voice at a child, then direct them in how to use positive reinforcement with children.
- If an adult or student volunteer tells a joke with sexual content, then ask them not to use sexual humor around children.
- If an adult or student volunteer wants to give a child a hug and the child seems uncomfortable (even in a visible area), then point out that the child seems uncomfortable and remind them that physical affection should never be forced. Regular evaluation of our Procedures and Code of Conduct Yearly, the church’s staff and advisory team will meet to evaluate and update the child protection procedures and code of conduct. Recommended updates will be adopted as needed.

III. Procedures for Working with Children’s and Youth Ministry

We are committed to promoting a safe environment for all children. Working toward this goal, we believe in promoting healthy relationships between adults and children. We will not tolerate any form of abusive behavior—verbal, emotional, physical, or sexual. The responsibility for promoting a safe environment for the protection of children rests on all adults at Grace Presbyterian Church. We have committed to the following procedures as we seek to prevent and respond to abuse with sound training and appropriate accountability.

A. Definitions

For purposes of this document the following definitions will apply:

Child: Any person under the age of 18 years old or any person whose mental capacity is that of a minor.

Adult: Any person at least 18 years of age.

Student Volunteer: Any person, under the age of 18, who volunteers with children at a church-sponsored activity or program.

Employee: Any adult paid for their work at Grace Presbyterian Church.

Child Abuse: Any willful act, omission, or threatened act that results in any physical, mental, or sexual injury or harm.

Child Sexual Abuse: Any sexual act between an adult and a child, or between two children, when one exerts power over the other, forcing, coercing or persuading a child to engage in any type of sexual act; sexual abuse also includes non-contact acts such as exhibitionism, exposure to pornography, voyeurism, and communicating in a sexual manner by phone, chat, text or internet.

Emotional Abuse: When a child is not nurtured or provided with love and security, but instead endures an environment of constant criticism, belittling, persistent threatening, or bullying.

Mandated Reporter: Any person who is required by law to report when they have a reason to believe child abuse has occurred; in Illinois, all paid employees who work with children or youth are mandated reporters; however, in keeping with biblical principles, for the sake of vulnerable children who cannot protect themselves, all adults are morally obligated to report abuse.

B. Screening and Eligibility for Service

All adults who work with children will submit the necessary information for a national, criminal background check before being allowed access to children. This information must be updated by all adults who work with children every two years. Any adult who has been convicted of child abuse or other violent crimes will not be eligible for employment at Grace Presbyterian Church or service as a volunteer within Grace's nursery or children's and youth ministries.

All adults and student volunteers who work with children will interview with the employee who will supervise their work. Also, they will have a background check.

All adults and student volunteers who work with children must be members or regular attenders of Grace Presbyterian Church for six months prior to their service with children and youth (with exceptions made for paid staff and others deemed appropriate by church staff).

Upon review of the background check and any other information required and received by the pastor or director of youth and children's ministry, each adult applicant will be approved or declined by the pastor or director of youth and children's ministry

If an applicant's name is selected for further inquiry, the Senior Pastor shall follow up on the concern and report back to the Session.

If the applicant is a relative of Senior Pastor, the approval will be made by the Associate Pastor and ratified by the Session at their next meeting.

Any previously approved adult may, at the discretion of the Session, have their prior approval reviewed at any time according to the process outlined above. Background checks will be run every five years.

C. Training

Before supervising children in any capacity all adults must attend Grace's Teacher/Volunteer Training, which will include child sexual abuse prevention training each year.

Before supervising children in any capacity, adults and student volunteers must read and agree to follow the child protection plan of Grace Presbyterian Church. Every year, all adults and student volunteers who work with children must read and agree to our child protection plan by signing the below document.

D. Staffing and Classroom Supervision

Staffing

Adequate and appropriate supervision is required to ensure the safety of the program participants and maintain a viable learning environment. Please note that a minimum of two ministry workers, with one being an adult, is always required regardless of the number of program participants present.

Grace Presbyterian will work to follow these staffing ratios:

- Nursery/Toddler One adult per 3-5 children
- Pre-School One adult per 6-8 children
- Elementary One adult per 7-8 children
- Youth One adult per 5-8 students

Because we want to provide the best care possible for children, we closely monitor the adult-child ratio in each classroom. Should a classroom go over the appropriate ration, the greeter will ask parents to volunteer.

Classroom Supervision

Children and youth must be under adult supervision during the scheduled ministry program time. Children's Ministry Workers will wear name tags while serving.

Supervisors of these programs will make regular visits to the classrooms and nurseries to ensure that the requirements outlined in this Policy are adhered to.

Two-deep supervision is essential: at least two ministry workers, with one being an adult, must be in the room at all times and at least one must have undergone a background check with satisfactory results and must have been approved by the Pastor/Ministry Director.¹

Exceptions:

In the rare event that an unusual circumstance arises requiring one adult to leave the room before a substitute is available, a replacement will be found to assist in that room as soon as is possible.

If a class does not meet the staffing ratios set forth above, and the Pastor/Ministry Director or Supervisor believes that the safety and/or learning of the program participants would be compromised if the program continued without sufficient staffing, the following steps will be taken:

- Combining Classes: Two classes may be combined, if practical, to meet the staffing requirements.
- Using Parent Helpers: If combining classes is not an appropriate option, a parent or other responsible adult may be asked to stay to help meet the preferred staffing ratios before additional students will be admitted to the classroom. An approved unpaid ministry worker will be designated to inform this helper of pertinent policies (example: bathroom policy).
- Canceling Class: Programs without adequate staffing will not commence. Additionally, programs which continually experience staffing deficiencies will be subject to review by the pastor or director of children's and your ministry to determine viability.

Every effort will be made to staff rooms for children ages 0 – 4 with at least one female adult.

Any student who wants to help in children's and youth ministry must be at least four years older than the age group they are seeking to serve, unless serving with a parent, and they must complete a Guidelines for Student Helpers Form.

¹ Although this policy is the ideal, due to small class sizes, we are modifying this two-deep policy by allowing a supervisor to provide the second person of the two-deep policy. The supervisor is to be stationed outside of the open-doored Sunday School classrooms where they have the ability to both see and hear into the classrooms.

E. Discipline and Classroom Management

Grace Presbyterian desires to encourage, stimulate and foster the Christian growth of all participants. Because of this, program participants will not be allowed to disrupt the classroom and/or hinder the growth and learning of others. We do not seek to merely control behavior, but to partner with parents to help shape a child's character to be more and more like that of Christ.

Classroom Rules

- Obey the teacher
- Listen
- Be kind, be safe
- Keep our hands and feet to yourself

Preventive Actions

- Create a loving, caring atmosphere
- Establish and communicate realistic expectations for children
- Focus on positive action
- Be fair and consistent with children

Corrective Action

- Try to handle any issues individually.
- Give warning when a child does not follow the rules
- Remind the child of the rules
- Explain to children why the behavior is unacceptable
- Redirect the child to something positive
- Explain the consequences of unacceptable behavior by telling children the correct way to behave.
- If a child again repeats the action guide him or her to a quiet place separate from the others for a short but designated time.
- After a third time, the teacher will fill out "A Note from Grace Kids". They will give the top portion to the parent(s) and the bottom copy to the Children's Ministry Director.

The purpose of discipline is not punishment for wrongdoing, but assistance in doing what is right. All interaction regarding discipline needs to carefully consider a child's dignity and fragile life.

- Physical punishment or intimidation will not be used. Discipline should be used to teach and correct rather than punish. It should not include slapping, hitting, shaming, yelling at, or belittling a child.
- If there is a serious incident that requires discipline, it is always wise to involve the parent. However, parents are asked not to use corporal punishment with their own children at church events.
- Parents will be notified if their child has bitten or hit another child.

F. Health

Maintaining the good health of children, youth, and ministry workers is a priority at Grace

Sick Policy

Children must be symptom free from the following illnesses without medication for 24 hours before entering the classroom:

- Fever of 100 or higher
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye or another eye infection)
- Nasal drainage which is green or yellow
- Open sores
- Cold
- Excessive coughing
- Lice

Please note: We do not recognize teething as being a cause of fever or diarrhea

- If a nursery age child develops any of these symptoms while in class the parent will be contacted.
- For an older child if the parent cannot be reached via cell phone, the child will stay outside the class with the supervisor.
- If elementary children are not feeling well, we will contact the parent via cell phone.
- Yellow Check-In tags will be given to children who have any allergies.

Injury & First Aid

- We can administer ONLY Band-Aids and ice packs. We are unable to administer any other medication to your child. If your child requires medication, please make arrangement so that you can personally administer what is required.
- For children with severe allergies requiring an EpiPen, please be sure to supply or arrange this with the supervisor.
- If there is an injury in the classroom, the teacher and /or volunteers should immediately tell the supervisor.
- Any injury must be reported to the parent since trivial injuries can turn out to be serious.
- The **caregiver** must complete and Accident/"Ouch" Report Form (located in the classroom folder as well as the children's office) as soon as possible (no later than 24 hours after the incident).

Snacks

- All children's hands must be cleaned before eating snack.
- A light snack is provided for children who are old enough to eat through kindergarten. The usual snack is water and one serving of Cheerios, Goldfish, Animal Crackers, or Fruit Gummies.
- Please double-check if anyone in your classroom has an allergy.
- Children are to have snack and cups only when they are seated.
- Cups should be promptly removed when the child is done.

- All bottles should be premised. Nursery workers are NOT allowed to mix formula due to health and sanitation reasons.

G. Special Concerns in Children’s Ministry (Nursery-4th Grade)

Registration

A Children’s Ministry Registration Form must be completed for any child who attends any of the church programs. These forms are available online, via our iPad check-in, and at the Information Center in the lobby.

Children should be registered and attend the class at their age, grade, or development level. Temporary exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Children’s Ministry Director.

Drop Off/Pick Up Policy

Children should not be accepted into a classroom until at least two ministry workers, with one being an adult, are present. Generally, supervision will be provided beginning 15 minutes before a program starts for Nursery/Toddler/PreK and Kindergarten classes. Children should not be accepted into a classroom without being checked in by a parent or guardian (i.e., having a printed name tag). No children will be released to parents/guardians without a parent tag. All Ministry Workers will wear an identifying name tag.

Nursery/Toddler/Pre-K/Kindergarten

Parents of all children in the Nursery must leave a mobile phone number on the printed roster. The phone number will be used to contact the parent during the service if necessary. Parents will be asked to keep their phone on vibrate.

All children will have a security tag that corresponds with their name tag. At check-in, parents will be given the security tag and the child will have the name tag placed on them (name tags should be placed on the child’s back).

Children will only be released to the person with the child’s matching security tag at the end of the time. If the tag is lost, verification of the parent’s identity will be needed before the child can be released. The Children’s Ministry Director (or a pastor or adult volunteer/staff with personal knowledge of the child) will be responsible to verify an identity.

Parents are requested NOT to enter the Nursery when dropping off or picking up the child unless asked to do so.

For visitors, upon completion of the Grace Kids Registration Form, the child’s name will be added to the database.

1st-4th Grade

Children will be dismissed during the children’s sermon to their class in the West Hall. Parents will be responsible for picking up their children at the end of the service. Children will be released to parents with matching name tags.

Diaper Changing

If a child is in need of a diaper change, and the changing area is in a publicly viewable location, the Worker has permission to change the diaper (unless a parent has noted otherwise on the CM Registration Form).

Bathroom Policy

Preschool

- Only female adults should assist preschoolers with bathroom needs. An exception is granted to a male family member of the child's household who is available to assist his preschool family member with his/her bathroom needs.
- If a classroom for preschoolers does not have a bathroom, an approved female adult volunteer or a supervisor should escort a child(ren) to the hallway bathroom. The adult is to screen the bathroom prior to use to make sure that everything is in order and should remain outside the bathroom door in order to escort the child/children back to the classroom when they are ready.
- If a child is taking longer than seems necessary, the adult should open the bathroom door and call the child's name. If a child requires assistance, the adult should prop open the bathroom door (using the garbage can or any other suitable object) and leave the stall door open as the child is assisted.
- An adult should never be alone with a child in a bathroom with the door closed. Likewise, a worker should never go into a bathroom stall with a child and shut the door.

Elementary School

- If a grade school child needs to use the bathroom during class time, he or she should be escorted to the bathroom by an adult or student helper.
- Although it is unlikely that a grade school child will need bathroom assistance, if for any reason a grade school child in the bathroom needs assistance, the policies outlined above for preschool children must be adhered to.

Parents should be advised to take their children to the bathroom prior to class.

H. Childcare for Church-Sponsored Events

When childcare is provided for a church-sponsored event using church facilities and not defined as Children's Ministry (example: congregational meetings, small group brunches, etc.), the following childcare requirements must be met:

- Childcare must be officially scheduled through the Children's Ministry Director.
- The check-in and check-out procedure outlined above, including the security tag system, should be used.
- A minimum of two adults, are required regardless of the number of children present.
- Children should not be accepted until at least two adults are present.
- The number of adults should be appropriate for the number of children present to ensure the safety of each child. See preferred Staffing Guidelines on page 18 of the Child Protection Policy.
- Guidelines on Proper Display of Affection must be followed, as in, I. E. of the Protection Policy.
- Physical punishment or intimidation are inappropriate disciplinary tools and are forbidden.
- The Bathroom Policy and Diaper Changing Policy, as in page 22. of the Protection Policy, must be followed.
- Childcare Ministry Workers need to be familiar with and follow Our Ready Response to Suspected Abuse outlined in Article VII of the Protection Policy.

I. Safety and Security

We believe it that is the utmost importance that our children are nurtured in a responsible and safe environment.

Security System

Each class will be equipped with a walkie-talkie to facilitate communications in case of emergency. A deacon on duty and the children's supervisor will carry a walkie talkie during a children's activities/classroom.

Fire and Smoke Emergencies

There will be an evacuation map in each of the classrooms. Each teacher needs to be familiar with this.

What to do if the Fire Alarm Sounds?

- If the fire alarm sounds while parents are in the service, they are requested to know the evacuation directions out of their child's classrooms. Parents are to meet children and teachers outside. Parents flooding the childcare area would cause congestion and prevent the children from being safely evacuated from the building.
- All volunteers and Staff should have attendance sheets and begin to line up each class to exit the building in an orderly fashion. Younger children will line up, grab a rope, or be carried by staff/volunteers.
- Evacuate immediately, using the nearest exit. Walk quickly. Do not run.
- If you encounter smoke, take short breaths through your nose and crawl along the floor to the nearest exit.
- Feel all doors with your hand before opening. If the door is hot, do not open it. If the door is cool, open it slowly, keeping behind the door in case you have to quickly close it to protect yourself.
- Proceed to the ground level and outdoors.
- Do not congregate near building exits, driveways, or roadways.
- Do not enter the building until an "all clear" is issued by the incident coordinator. (Note: The "all clear" should be initially issued by the Winnetka Fire Department.)

Evacuation of Children

Nursery (South side of the building)

Childcare workers will safely take the classroom roster and evacuate all children. These individuals should exit the door on the south side of the building near the parking lot. Teachers should take a right out of the door, proceed along the sidewalk around the back of the building and go to the corner of Linden and Cherry. All children listed as present on the roster need to be accounted for immediately. Childcare workers/volunteers then wait for parents to claim child(ren).

Toddler Room (North side of the building)

Childcare workers will safely take the classroom roster and evacuate all children. One teacher should remain at the top of the stairs while children are brought to the landing to wait to exit the building together. Calmly leave with children through the door on the north side of the building, and head west on cherry and stop at the corner of Linden and Cherry. All children listed as present on the roster need to be accounted for immediately. Childcare workers/volunteers then wait for parents to claim their children.

Pre-K and Kindergarten Classrooms

Teachers and childcare workers should take the roster and proceed to the basement exit with all children. Exit through the exterior door between the bathroom and boiler room and take a right out of the door, up the stairs, proceed along the sidewalk around the back of the building and go to the corner of Linden and Cherry. All children listed as present on the roster need to be accounted for immediately. Childcare workers/volunteers then wait for parents to claim their children.

1st-4th Grade in the West Hall

Teachers and childcare workers should take the roster and all children and proceed to exit through the glass doors in the back of the West Hall. Teachers need to be cautious when opening these doors as groups of small children will be using this sidewalk as an evacuation route. Teachers and children should head west on Cherry Street and stop at the corner of Linden and Cherry. All children listed as present on the roster need to be accounted for immediately. Childcare workers/volunteers then wait for parents to claim their children.

Meeting place for parents and children:

Parents should meet all children (birth- 6th grade) at the SE corner of LINDEN & CHERRY. Parents should notify the volunteer or childcare worker when you have your child. Volunteers will have their roster to keep track of all children until they are reunited. Cell phone numbers are listed on the roster in case a parent needs to be contacted.

Important "dos" and "don'ts" for teachers and childcare workers

- Remain calm.
- Do not return for coats, purses, briefcases, etc., after you have left the area.
- Do not return to your area until the "all clear" signal is given.

Active Threat Emergencies

For intruder/active threat emergencies, classroom teachers will be alerted through our walkie talkie system.

The following codes will be used:

- **Code Yellow** - Lock doors keep children calm, quiet and away from open windows when possible. Wait in classrooms for further instructions or until the all clear is given.
- **Code Red** - Evacuate children using the Fire Evacuation system outlined on pages 24-25.

J. Special Concerns in Youth Ministry

Basic Rule: Do not put yourself in situations where you are alone with a student.

Volunteer Screening/Staffing:

- All volunteers working with students on a regular basis need to fill out a Volunteer Profile and undergo a background check. The paperwork must be completed and processed before any volunteer may work with youth.
- Two-deep leadership is always required, both having gone through the screening process.
- A volunteer may not be alone with a student at any time or in any place, with the exception of the discipleship policy outlined below.
- Students must be under adult supervision at all times.

Volunteer-Student interactions:

- Giving or receiving back rubs are off limits for any adult volunteer. Students should be discouraged from giving or receiving back rubs to each other.
- There is not to be any dating, or any other romantic involvement between a student and adult volunteer. Volunteers need to be careful to avoid encouraging any sort of romantic behaviors from students.
- Adult volunteers must be cleared to provide any transportation in accordance with the Westminster Transportation Policy.
- No physical discipline should be undertaken by an adult volunteer.

Discipleship Meetings:

- We encourage leaders to meet with students for discipleship, even one-to-one meetings. However, leaders should meet in public places when they are not the only adult present.

Driving:

- Leaders who are approved drivers can give students rides to events but leaders should not be alone in a car with a student.
- Leaders should also not be the only person in a car full of only the opposite sex.

Rooming:

- On retreats and overnight events, there needs to be at least two gender appropriate adult leaders in each room/tent while adhering to the 1:7 student to leader ratio.

Proper Display of Affection:

- Leaders need to have appropriate boundaries with students, especially the opposite sex.
- Handshakes, high fives, and occasional side hugs are fine. Side hugs should only be initiated by students.
- Avoid back rubs and rough-housing.

Incident reporting:

- Any incidents resulting in injury or potential injury need to be reported to the supervising staff member and documented on the incident report form within 24 hours.

K. Field Trips/Overnight Events

Field Trips and Special Events

- Church-sponsored off-campus activities must be pre-approved by the Pastor/Ministry Director. Parents should be notified at least one week prior to the outing.
- Proper written consent/medical release forms are required for each student participating in off-campus activities using the Parent/Legal Guardian Consent for Domestic Trip and All-Year Participation Form for Student Ministries.
- Appropriate adult/student ratios will be ensured by the staff member in charge (See Staffing Ratios listed above). Again, two-deep supervision is essential for any excursion. For mixed groups, both male and female Adult Unpaid Ministry Workers are required.

- Be aware when transportation is involved in an activity, the Grace Presbyterian "Transportation Policy" must be followed and Driver/Vehicle Information Form completed.

Overnight Policy

Note: All overnight adult personnel must have successfully completed a background check. Exceptions may be granted by the Senior Pastor or the Director of Youth Ministry.

- Church-sponsored overnight activities must be pre-approved by the Senior Pastor or Director of Youth Ministry.
- No overnight activities for children 3rd grade and younger will be allowed (except for parent/child outings).
- Proper written consent/medical release forms are required for each student participating in off-campus activities using the Parent/Legal Guardian Consent for Domestic Trip and All-Year Participation Form for Student Ministries.
- All overnight activities must have at least two approved gender appropriate adults for both boys and girls.
- Staffing ratios for all overnight events are one gender-appropriate adult for every five students, and need to be maintained throughout the outing. Exceptions are granted by the session on a case-to-case basis.
- Unpaid ministry workers should be assigned a specific group of same-gender participants for whom they will be responsible for the duration of the overnight event.
- Dormitory style sleeping arrangements are preferred. Other venues may be used only at the discretion of the pastor and director of children's and youth ministry.
- Camping events are permissible provided that the staffing requirements are adhered to. Tents or camping arrangements must be suitable for 8-10 individuals, and two gender-appropriate adult ministry workers must be in each tent.
- Overnights involving both genders must be strictly supervised, taking precautions to keep genders appropriately separated.
- At no time should an adult be alone with a program participant unless clearly visible by others.

L. Transportation Policy

Maximum safety for all individuals while traveling is our utmost concern. Therefore, all drivers must complete the Driver/Vehicle Information Form and adhere to the "Transportation Policy" whether using private vehicles, church vehicles, or rented vehicles, when providing transportation for any of the ministries of Grace Presbyterian.

Safety Requirements

- The driver must read and agree to this Transportation Policy and turn in a completed Driver/Vehicle Information Form to the pastor and director of children's and youth ministry prior to the ministry event.
- The driver must have a valid driver's license.
- The driver must abide by all traffic laws.
- The driver and vehicle must be insured and provide proof of insurance to a pastor and director of children's and youth ministry.
- The use of seatbelts by all passengers is mandatory. Hence the number of seatbelts in the vehicle will determine the maximum number of passengers. There are NO exceptions.

- All children under the age of 12 are to be seated in a back seat with a seatbelt in use to prevent injury in the event of passenger side airbag deployment.
- No driver shall use any hand-held device when driving, even if using a “hands-free” device. The driver must pull over safely, stop the vehicle, and then place or answer a call.
- The following distance restrictions must be observed:
 - One rest stop every 250 miles
 - No more than 14 hours of travel in any one 24-hour period
 - No travel between the hours of 12:00 am and 6:00 am
- The driver must report any incident involving accident, injury or police to the pastor and director of children’s and youth ministry as soon as possible within 24 hours of incident.
- If a driver who has been approved under this policy is involved in any accident which is deemed to be his/her fault, the pastor and director of children’s and youth ministry may suspend his/her driving privileges for Grace Presbyterian ministries.

Additional requirements for those transporting minors

- The driver will be subject to a background check.
- The driver must be 25 years of age.
- The driver may not be alone in a vehicle with an unrelated legal minor or person with disabilities without parental or guardian consent.

Using Church or Rented Vehicles

Only approved drivers are permitted to drive the church or rented vehicles. Adults of opposite gender (excepting immediate family members) may not travel on church business unless at least one additional person is present. All youth and children’s ministries must work with the Church Administrator to ensure appropriate steps are taken well in advance of a scheduled trip. Driver approval is based solely on the procedures undertaken by the Church Administrator in compliance with the insurance policy of the church.

Exceptions to these regulations may be granted at the discretion of the Ministry Director or in the case of an emergency by a Pastoral staff member.



Volunteer Interest Form

Thank you for your willingness to serve our Lord by serving this church. Christ's call to leadership is a privilege and responsibility. Grace Presbyterian's mission statement is to **"Welcoming our neighbors to grow together in Christ and serve God in our community and world"**. Spiritual leadership is not merely a matter of right belief. It also requires Christian character and faithfulness. We expect leaders to strive to model a Biblical life of faith, repentance, and seeking after Christ-like holiness.

Personal Information

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Home Address: _____ City, State, Zip Code:

Marital Status: _____

Employment

Present Occupation: _____ Employer: _____

Vehicle Information

Any traffic violations/accidents within the past 3 years? ____

Do you own a car? ____

Are you willing to drive for ministry functions? ____

Church Background and Ministry Experience

Describe your personal relationship with Jesus Christ: _____

Why do you want to volunteer for this ministry? _____

What two greatest strengths do you bring to this ministry?

What are your two greatest weaknesses you feel may hinder your ministry?

Have you had any training in theology or counseling?

Confidential Background Information

Have you been disciplined by a local church for anything that would hurt this ministry or tarnish the reputation of this ministry? If yes, please explain: _____

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? ____ If so, please explain: _____

Have you ever been formally accused of child abuse? ____ If so, please explain: _____

Statement of Faith

Please indicate your affirmation of the following vows by writing "yes" next to each statement:

1. Do you rely upon Jesus Christ alone for your salvation and the forgiveness of your sins? ____

2. Do you believe in the Bible as the inerrant Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and life? _____
3. Do you promise to teach the Bible in a way that promotes and deepens an appreciation of the theology of our church? _____
4. Do you subscribe to the Apostles Creed as outlined below? _____

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
and born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Are you able to commit to training twice a year? _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____



Student Helper Form

Any student wishing to serve at Grace must have a parent's permission to do so. Both the student and the parent need to read and agree to abide by the Children's Ministry Guidelines. By completing and submitting this form, you are consenting to abide by the policies and guidelines listed below as you serve at Grace.

Name: _____

Grade: _____

Email Address: _____

Parents' Email Address: _____

Please click each box below to indicate your understanding of an agreement with the following statements:

____ Student Helpers must be four or more years older than the children they are serving to be allowed to assist in a classroom, with one exception. Students who are less than four years older than the children they are serving are allowed to help in a class alongside their parent. Student Helpers will always work alongside an adult, and never be left alone with the children.

____ Student Helpers will remain in the classroom for the duration of the program in which they are helping (There will be no switching back and forth between classes or wandering around the halls).

____ If a Student Helper is behaving inappropriately, the parent or supervising adult will take the student aside and direct the student as to the proper behavior. Repeated inappropriate behavior may be cause for suspension or ending of the student's service in this ministry.

____ Student Helpers will only be allowed to serve maximum of twice a month to model being fed by God's word in the service.

Ministries I am Applying to Serve With (Circle all that apply):

Nursery

Toddler Room

Pre-K/Kindergarten

1st-4th Grade

Signature: _____

Date: _____



Background Check Permission Form

I, _____ [print full name, including maiden name],
give my permission to Grace Presbyterian Church of the North Shore to obtain information relating to my
criminal history record. I understand that this information will be utilized in determining my eligibility for either
an employment or volunteer position with this church. I also understand that as long as I remain either an
employee or volunteer here, Grace Presbyterian Church of the North Shore may repeat this criminal history
record check at any time.

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Race: _____ Sex: _____

Social Security Number: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Signature: _____ Today's Date: _____



Code of Conduct Acknowledgement Form

I acknowledge that I have read and agree to follow the Grace Presbyterian Church Code of Conduct. I have read and agree to abide by the Grace Presbyterian Church Reporting Protocol. In addition, it is my responsibility to read and comply with any future updates to any and all of our child protection documents.

I confirm that I have not been accused of (to the best of my knowledge), been investigated for, or prosecuted for instances involving any form of abuse or inappropriate behavior with a child. I agree not to engage in any such behaviors.

I further agree that as an individual who has engendered trust from a child, I will not tolerate physical, emotional, or sexual child abuse or neglect.

I understand the importance of accountability to the other adults who work with children. Therefore, I give my permission for anyone who observes any inappropriate or questionable interaction between me and a child to speak to me regarding their observation. I will not take offense when approached by someone with concerns about my interaction, because I understand that the protection of each child must be my first priority.

I agree to immediately report to the appropriate leadership any reasonable suspicion of or disclosure of inappropriate behavior between an adult and a minor or between two minors when one has power over the other by virtue of age or physical abilities, in accordance with our Reporting Protocol.

Name

Date

Position

Supervisor's Signature



Suspected Child Abuse Form (Confidential)

To be used after contacting The Winnetka Police Department or DCFS-800.252.2873 report has been made.

Name of person observing or receiving disclosure of child abuse: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Are you reporting a disclosure or suspicion of abuse?

- Disclosure
- Suspicion

Incident Information – Disclosure

Child's Information

Child's Name: _____

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy): _____

Classroom/Grade: _____

Details

Date and time you received the disclosure: _____

Where did you receive the disclosure? _____

How did the child disclose to you (verbally, text message, etc.)?

Provide the child's statement if you received a disclosure (*as best as you remember, use the exact words the child said or communicated; continue on back of page if necessary. If the child communicated electronically, please provide a copy of the communication*):

Name of person accused of the abuse: _____

Is this person engaged in ministry at Grace? _____

If yes, how so? (Paid staff, volunteer, family member, other): _____

What is this person's relationship to the child?: _____

Contact information of the accused:

Phone: _____

Email: _____

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CONTACT THE ACCUSED!

Incident Information – Suspicion

Name of the person you suspect: _____

Is this person engaged in ministry at Grace? _____

If yes, how so? (Paid staff, volunteer, family member, other): _____

What is this person's relationship to the child? _____

Contact information of the accused:

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Describe in detail the behavior you observed or the boundary violation of our Code of Conduct that causes

your suspicion:

Report Information

Name of DCS Representative: _____

Date and Time of Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Name of the person receiving the report: _____

Position held in the church: _____

Date and Time of this Report: _____

Date and Time this Incident Report was received: _____

Reporter Signature: _____

Signature of the one receiving the report: _____



Boundary Violation Report (Confidential)

Any adult or student volunteer who observes any other adult or student volunteer in an isolated area with a child or observes any other adult or student volunteer repeatedly violating boundaries, should use this form to create a record of the incident. Turn this form into the church administrative assistant in a sealed envelope.

Name of the person observing the boundary violation: _____

Today's Date: _____

Name of person(s) involved in the incident: _____

Child(ren) involved in the incident: _____

Location(s) where boundary violation(s) took place: _____

Date(s) of boundary violation(s): _____

Circumstances of the violation(s). Give as much detail as you can remember (use the back of their sheet if you need more space).



Accident/"Ouch" Report Form

Child's Name: _____

Parent's Name(s): _____

Parent's Phone Number(s): _____

Parent's Email(s): _____

Name of the individual responsible for supervision: _____

Date of Incident: (dd/mm/yyyy) _____ Time of Incident: _____ AM or PM (Circle One)

Location of Incident (please be specific): _____

Event/Program: _____

Injuries Sustained with what equipment if any:

How did the injury happen?: _____

Did the injured person require medical care? _____ (If yes and this was a serious injury continue on the other side of the page).

How was it treated: _____

Teacher/Leader on Duty (Please Print Name): _____

Name of any other witnesses present: _____

Injuries requiring Medical Care

Was First Aid administered? ____ By Whom? _____

Describe the first-aid/medical attention that was administered: _____

Was the AED administered? ____ By Whom? _____

Was CPR administered? ____ By Whom? _____

Was 911 Called? ____ By Whom? _____

Injured Party was transported to the hospital by: Ambulance__ Personal Vehicle __ Not Transported __

Did the injured person refuse medical attention? _____

Were family members present? Yes ____ No ____ Name(s): _____

Were the police called? Yes ____ No ____ By Whom: _____

Was a police report filed? Yes ____ No ____ Officer's Name: _____

Report serious injuries immediately. Please return completed forms within 24 hours of incident.

Signature: _____

Parent's Signature: _____



A Note from the Children's Ministry

Child's Name: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

Grace Kids Class: _____

Today's Date: _____

Classroom behavior/incident: _____

Action Taken: _____

Note from the Teacher to the Parent:



A Note from Grace Kids - Copy for Children's Ministry Director

Child's Name: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

Grace Kids Class: _____

Today's Date: _____

Classroom behavior/incident: _____

Action Taken: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

Teacher's Signature: _____



Child Registration Form

Parents' Names: _____

Cell Phone(s): _____

Email(s): _____

Home Address (Street, City, Zip Code): _____

Child's Name	M/F	Birthdate (mm/dd/yy)	Class/Grade	Special Notes: Allergies, restrictions, etc

I grant permission for Grace Presbyterian Church to use photographs of my children for any legal use, including but not limited to: publicity, copyright issues, illustration, advertising, and web content.

Yes

No

Additional Information

Does your child have any allergies, medications or special medical concerns that we should be aware of? If yes, list all that apply.

We want to provide the best possible care for your Child. What should we know? Are they potty training? Can they have snacks? Do they have any behavioral challenges? Special interests?

Should your child's activities be restricted for any reason? If yes explain.

For children kindergarten and under, please indicate the names of any adults that may collect your child (with their security tag) at the end of class/Worship.

Agreement with Grace Presbyterian's Children's Ministry Policies

Please check the following boxes to indicate your understanding of and your agreement with the policies of our Children's Ministry program. If you agree, please initial on the lines below.

My child and I agree to abide by the rules and regulations established by Grace Presbyterian Church for the health, safety, and welfare of the children attending the ministries.

I understand and acknowledge that my child's participation in the Grace Presbyterian Church's Children's Ministry carries a risk of injury. I hereby agree to release and hold harmless any staff, officers, directors, employees and/or agents of Grace Presbyterian from any claims, costs, expenses (including attorney's fees) and/or damages arising out of my child's participation in Grace's Children's Ministry.

I understand that Grace Presbyterian Church does not provide accident or dental insurance, and that I shall be responsible for any and all medical bills should my child sustain an injury, illness, or loss of life in conjunction with his/her participation in a Children's Ministry event, including (if applicable) transportation to and from the event activities.

I understand that my child may be traveling to or from various Children's Ministry events in vans (including but not limited to 12 passenger or 15 passenger vans), buses leased or owned by Grace, or in privately owned vehicles.

Grace Presbyterian Church reserves the right to dismiss any Children's Ministry event participant whose conduct is deemed, as determined by the staff, as being detrimental to other children, staff, or any aspect of the Children's Ministry event.

Grace Presbyterian Church reserves the right to deny enrollment, admission or participation in any Children's Ministry event participant if that participant is found by staff to exhibit any physical or emotional behavior which would impede his/her ability to fully participate or prevent others from participating in any Children's Ministry event activity.

Grace Presbyterian Church reserves the right to use any Children's Ministry event participant in any promotional photographs or other materials produced in conjunction with a Grace Children's Ministry event. The use of any Children's Ministry event participant by Grace in connection with any aforementioned promotional activity shall not entitle the Children's Ministry event participant to compensation from Grace.

Grace Presbyterian Church shall not be responsible for articles of clothing, personal effects or other belongings that are lost or damaged by fire, theft, other Children's Ministry participants or staff.

I agree that this release covers each and every time the participant participates in any activity of Grace Presbyterian, whether on premises owned or operated by Grace Presbyterian or at any other location.

Trusting that those in charge will take every possible safety precaution and every possible attempt will be made to contact parents or guardians immediately in the event of injury or other emergency, I give my consent (in the event that I cannot be reached), to the physician selected by WPC to hospitalize, secure proper treatment for and to order injection, anesthesia or surgery for my child, and understand that I will be financially responsible for the treatment.

Parent's Signature: _____ Today's Date: _____



Participation Agreement and Waiver of Liability

Grace Presbyterian Church (GPC) welcomes your child in our Children and Youth Ministries (CYM) and their programs. It is necessary, however, for Grace to have an understanding with you regarding Grace's responsibility in the event of accident or illness involving any participant in our programs. We, therefore, ask you to agree to the following terms and conditions:

I, the parent and/or legal guardian of _____, ("Participant") consent to allow Participant to participate in the Children's or Youth Ministries at Grace Presbyterian Church. In consideration of the participant being allowed to participate, I hereby acknowledge and agree as follows:

- 1) The participant's participation in these ministries is entirely voluntary.
- 2) GPC shall not be responsible for any of participant's personal property that is lost or damaged by fire, theft, other participants, or staff.
- 3) GPC reserves the right to dismiss, temporarily or permanently, any participant whose conduct is deemed, by the SMP staff, to be detrimental to participant, other participants, staff or any aspect of CYM.
- 4) GPC reserves the right to deny enrollment, admission, or participation of any participant to all or part of any CYM program if the staff determines that the participant appears to have a physical or emotional condition which impedes their ability to fully participate in an activity or activities, or prevents other participants from fully participating.
- 5) GPC reserves the right to use photographs of any participant taken at any children or youth activity in promotional and/or other materials produced in conjunction with our children and youth programming. The use of such photos by Grace shall not entitle participant to any compensation.
- 6) I certify that participant is in good physical and mental health and does not have any physical or mental conditions which could affect participant's ability to participate in children or youth activities. I realize that participant's participation in these activities involves some element of risk, as a result not only of participant's actions, inactions or negligence but also from the actions, inactions or negligence of others and the condition of the facilities, equipment or areas where activities are conducted.
- 7) I understand that Participant may travel to or from various activities in vans (including, but not limited to, 12- and 15-passenger vans) or on buses leased or owned by Grace Presbyterian Church. I understand that they may also be traveling in other privately owned vehicles, which are not covered under Grace's insurance. I acknowledge that such travel has inherent risks which I willingly assume. I take responsibility to get participant to the location from where transportation to the event will occur.
- 8) Knowing and understanding the risks involved with participation in the children and youth ministries at Grace, I hereby voluntarily and willingly assume full and complete responsibility for all losses and damages, including injury, illness and death, resulting from participant's participation in these activities including transportation to and from the activities. I agree to be financially responsible for any losses and damages resulting from participant's participation at Grace.
- 9) Participant has health insurance coverage appropriate for his/her participation in the CYM I understand that Grace Presbyterian Church does not provide any insurance for participant in connection with his/her participation in the any children or youth activities.

- 10) I hereby agree I will not sue or make claims against and I will forever release, indemnify and hold harmless Grace Presbyterian Church, its employees, agents, successors and assigns, singularly and collectively, from and against any blame and liability for any injury, harm, loss, inconvenience or any other damage of any kind whatsoever, which may result from or be connected in any way to participant's page two of two participation in CYM activities, however caused or alleged to be caused, including injuries caused in whole or in part by the negligence of Grace, its representatives, agents, employees, instructors, or participants.
- 11) I further understand that Grace Presbyterian Church does not assume responsibility for any loss, injury or damage to person or property in connection with the CYM activities, including transportation to and from, however caused or alleged to be caused.
- 12) I agree this Release covers each and every time participant participates in any activity of Grace Presbyterian Church, whether on premises owned or operated by Grace or at any other location.
- 13) Should any one or more of the provisions of this agreement be determined to be unenforceable, all other provisions of this Agreement shall nevertheless be effective and shall not be affected by such unenforceability.

Parent/Guardian Name (printed)	Parent Email		
Student Name (printed)	Student Birthdate	Student Grade	Student School
Home Address	City, State, Zip		Home Phone
Parent Contact Phone (1)	Parent Contact Phone (2)	Emergency Contact Phone (3)	

Are there any other concerns we should be aware of? (Special medications; transmittable disease, allergies; custody issues; physical, mental or learning challenges, etc.): _____

In the event that my child is injured and I cannot be reached, I grant permission to the adult in charge of my son/daughter for emergency medical treatment and I agree to be financially responsible for that treatment.

I have read and understand the above provisions and it is my intention that by signing below I will bind myself, my spouse, the participant, and my and the participant's heirs, successors, executors, estate and dependents to the terms stated above.

Parent/Guardian Signature	Date
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Driver/Vehicle Information Form

Please fill out the form below and submit to the staff or Pastor/Ministry Director in charge of the event you are providing transportation for.

Driver's Name: _____ Age: _____

Ministry Event: _____

Staff Contact: _____

Driver License Number and State: _____ License Plate Number: _____

Vehicle Insurance Information: _____

Numbers of seatbelts in vehicle: _____

I own the vehicle I am driving today. Yes No

My vehicle is in good working condition and regularly maintained. Yes No

~ Yes, I have completed and attached an Unpaid Ministry Worker Release Form so that a background check may be completed.²

I have read and understand the requirements and restrictions of the Transportation Policy and agree to follow them. I further understand that my failure to act in accordance with the Transportation Safety Requirements as outlined above could cause me to incur personal liability in case of an accident.

Signature

Date

² Required for those transporting minors.