



Child Safety Policy

Purpose

Renew Christian Church endeavors to establish a secure and nurturing environment for children engaging in our programs and activities. By incorporating the following measures, our aim is to safeguard the children of Renew Christian Church from instances of sexual misconduct or inappropriate conduct, while also shielding our staff and volunteers from unfounded allegations.

Standard of Conduct

Every individual associated with Renew Christian Church, whether as a volunteer, paid staff member, full-time, or part-time worker, is required to adhere to this Child Safety Policy. Any breaches of this policy will be addressed promptly and may entail legal consequences as mandated by law.

Definitions

1. Child Sexual Abuse - "any sexual activity with a child, whether in the home by a caretaker, in a day care situation, a foster/residential setting, or any other setting, including on the street by a person unknown to the child. The abuser may be an adult, an adolescent, or another child, provided the child is four years older than the victim" (National Resource Center on Child Sexual Abuse, 1992).
2. Sexual Activity - may be violent or non-violent, touching or non-touching, and is an exploitation of a child's vulnerability and powerlessness. It involves children in sexual behaviors for which they are not personally, socially, and developmentally ready.
3. Sexual Misconduct - inappropriate behavior relating to or involving a sexual nature.
4. Child - For purposes of this policy, the terms "child" or "children" include all persons under the age of eighteen (18) years.

Screening Procedures

Background Checks (No Exceptions)

- Every paid staff member, whether employed part-time or full-time, irrespective of their job description, must undergo a national criminal background check as well as a statewide criminal or statewide sexual offender background check.
- Volunteers who have more than incidental contact with minors and are involved in our Children's Ministry are required to consent to both a national criminal background check and a statewide criminal or statewide sexual offender background check. Prior background checks for employment or other volunteering roles will not exempt volunteers from undergoing background checks for our Children's Ministry.
- The background check will be conducted prior to the commencement of employment or volunteer work. The results of this background check will be disclosed to the potential employee/volunteer. In the event that the information provided in the background check is contested by the applicant, the final decision regarding which information will be taken into consideration in the decision-making process will be made by the Senior Pastor and Leadership Team.
- Any applicant or volunteer with a prior conviction related to sexual offenses is not eligible for service in a position directly involving children.
- The Children's Director or Lead Minister will securely retain all background check records.

Supervision Procedures

1. Two Adult Rule: At all times, there must be a minimum of two adults sharing supervisory duties for children. If necessary, one adult can be substituted with a qualified and responsible teenager who is not related to the other volunteer. However, in instances where an adult needs to be alone with a child for legitimate reasons such as counseling or visitation, all workers must obtain prior consent from the child's parent or guardian. This rule also applies to phone interactions with minors. Anyone working with minors should restrict their phone conversations to providing basic information about events or involve a third party in text messages.
2. Ratios: Each environment maintains specific adult-to-child ratios that must be followed. If a room has an excess of children compared to the number of adult volunteers available, adjustments should be implemented. The ratios at Renew Christian Church are as follows:
 - a. 0 - 2 years old = 1:3
 - b. 3 yrs - 5 yrs = 1:6
 - c. Elementary = 1:10
3. A leader from the Children's Ministry or a designated leader from Renew Christian Church will conduct random checks on all classrooms regularly.
4. Children who are elementary age or younger are required to wear name badges and/or be signed in and out of church supervision (Planning Center Online kids check-in).

5. Any supervisor is tasked with addressing suspicious behavior or any conduct that may contravene church policy. They are also responsible for documenting and reporting such incidents to the appropriate authorities.
6. Renew Christian Church adheres to a policy of not administering either prescription or non-prescription medications to the children under our care. Parents are expected to administer medications at home. Exceptions to this policy may be granted to parents of children with potentially life-threatening conditions, such as asthma or severe allergic reactions. Parents of such children should discuss their situation with the Renew Christian Church Children's Director to establish a plan of action.
7. Renew Christian Church maintains a policy of not permitting any child who has experienced a fever or vomiting within the preceding 24 hours into children's classrooms.
8. Renew Christian Church strictly prohibits the administration of corporal punishment, even if parents have suggested or given permission for it. Under no circumstances shall there be spanking, grabbing, hitting, or any other form of physical discipline of children. Workers are encouraged to consult with the Renew Christian Church Children's Director if assistance is required with disciplinary issues.
9. If a child or youth sustains an injury while in our care, the following procedures will be implemented:
 - a. For minor injuries such as scrapes and bruises, workers will administer First Aid (e.g., Band-Aids, ice packs) as necessary and promptly inform the child's parent or guardian about the injury when the child is picked up from our care.
 - b. In cases where injuries necessitate medical treatment beyond basic First Aid, the parent and/or guardian will be promptly notified, along with the supervisor of the children's worker. If circumstances warrant, such as the severity of the injury, an ambulance will be summoned.
 - c. Following the child's receipt of appropriate medical care, an incident report will be filled out for injuries necessitating treatment by a medical professional.

Reporting Procedures

1. All allegations must be taken seriously.
2. All allegations must be promptly reported to the most senior staff member or volunteer available who is not directly involved in the allegation.
3. In cases transpiring at church functions, the most senior staff member or leader available, who is not directly implicated in the allegation, will notify the parents or legal guardian. For incidents transpiring outside church functions, the church will adhere to mandatory legal reporting requirements.
4. If a child displays signs of the following, the most senior staff member or volunteer available will report these signs to Child Protective Services:
 - a. Physical abuse or neglect
 - b. Sexual abuse
 - c. Mental abuse or neglect

Reporting Abuse or Neglect in Durham County

5. All situations will be handled forthrightly with due respect for privacy and confidentiality.
6. We will offer complete cooperation to civil authorities when necessary.
7. No accused individual will be approached by anyone other than the designated authorities and/or the most senior church staff or volunteer available, who is not directly involved in the allegation, until the safety of the child or victim is ensured.
8. No victim involved in an allegation or anyone responsible for reporting an allegation will face retaliation.
9. All staff and volunteers are obligated to report any indications or evidence of physical or sexual abuse to the most senior church staff member or leader available who is not directly implicated in the allegation.
10. The church is also mandated to promptly report to the appropriate law enforcement authority as necessitated by local, state, or federal statutes.