

**Cross Roads Presbyterian Church**  
**Children and Youth Protection Policy**  
**February 2018**



**2310 Haymaker Road,  
Monroeville, PA 15146  
412.372.2226**

**[www.CrossRoadsPresbyterian.com](http://www.CrossRoadsPresbyterian.com)**

**Approved by Session on February 21, 2018**

# **Cross Roads Presbyterian Church Children and Youth Protection Policy Table of Contents**

1. Theological Statement
2. Chapter One
  - a. Definitions
  - b. Approved Adults
  - c. Record Keeping
  - d. Church Key Policy
3. Chapter Two
  - a. General Guidelines
  - b. Permission Slips, Overnight Activities, Transportation
  - c. Nursery Protection Guidelines
  - d. Children and Youth Classroom Protection Guidelines
  - e. Youth Confirmation Mentoring
4. Chapter Three
  - a. Mandated Reporting
  - b. Reporting and Documentation
  - c. Follow-up, Investigation, and Documentation
  - d. Sharing Information
  - e. Continuing the Ministry of the Church
  - f. Response to Allegations/Admissions; Criminal Charges
  - g. Violations of Child/Youth Protection Policy
5. Chapter Four
  - a. Providing Community for Known Sex Offenders
  - b. Minimum Guidelines for Church Participation
6. Chapter Five
  - a. Safe Church Committee
  - b. Duties
  - c. Members
  - d. Quality of SCC Members
  - e. Meetings
  - f. Term Limits
  - g. Safe Church Committee Accountability
7. Forms/Supplements/Appendices

# **Cross Roads Presbyterian Church Children and Youth Protection Policy Theological Statement**

## **We Covenant to Protect our Children**

We learned when we were young that “Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world.” Jesus showed this love when he rebuked his disciples for trying to keep children from him, commanding, “Let them come to me” (Matthew 19:14, Mark 10:14, Luke 18:16). He further warned his followers of their duty to protect children by saying it would be better for one to be drowned in the sea than to cause harm to a child (Matthew 18:6, Mark 9:42, Luke 17:2). It is in the name of and under the command of Jesus our Lord that we covenant to be a place where children are safe, loved, and nurtured, for “They are precious in his sight.”

## **We Covenant to Protect our Workers**

We learn from scripture and the confessions that we are one body and that we are to “bear one another’s burdens” (Galatians 6:2). We recognize that we live in an age where false accusations of child endangerment can have detrimental impacts on individuals and on the entire Church. In order to protect one another and to protect the body, we covenant to be a place where we protect our child/youth workers from false accusations.

## **We Covenant to Protect our Resources**

We know that God has blessed us abundantly (2 Corinthians 9:10-11) and that God’s blessings come to us so that through us as God’s people others may be blessed (Genesis 12:1-3). We recognize therefore that our obligation is to be wise stewards of God’s many gifts to us. We know that without taking all proper precautions to protect our children and our workers, our church is left open to liability in the event that a child is harmed on our premises. In order to be good stewards of God’s many blessings to us, we covenant to prevent the unnecessary use of these gifts in protracted legal disputes by ensuring that we have taken all of these necessary precautions.

## **We Covenant to Protect our Witness**

We know that we are the heirs of the tradition and history of the entire Church and its witness to Jesus Christ. We have seen how failure to protect the Church’s children damages not only the lives of those who are harmed but damages our ability to witness to the transforming love of Christ. In order to prevent those who respond to our witness from stumbling (1 Corinthians 8:13), we covenant to protect our inheritance and witness by submitting ourselves to a level of scrutiny that ensures that we are seen to be above reproach.

For these reasons, we respond to Christ’s call by enacting this policy to protect our children, our volunteers, and our witness for the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

# **Cross Roads Presbyterian Church Children and Youth Protection Policy Chapter One Definitions, Approved Adults, Record Keeping, and Church Key Policy**

## **DEFINITIONS**

This Child Protection Policy applies to those working with children and youth in Cross Roads Presbyterian Church, Cross Roads Preschool, Cub/Boy Scout Troop.

**Approved Adult** = Anyone over 18 years of age who has satisfied the requirements of the Child Protection Policy. An approved Adult can be an employee or a non-employee of the congregation. Approved Adults include, but are not limited to:

1. All employed staff
2. Sunday children's programming volunteers (God's Kids, Kingdom Kids, Nursery)
3. Youth group leaders, assistants, and chaperones
4. Children's choir director and assistants
5. Vacation Bible School teachers, volunteers, and helpers
6. Anyone who works directly with children/youth including scout leaders and assistants
7. Day Camp Staff
8. Preschool staff and volunteers
9. Anyone else who works directly with children/youth including scout leaders and assistants.
10. Safe Church Committee members

**Child or Youth** = Persons age 0 – age 17

**Congregation** = Cross Roads Presbyterian Church

**CPSL** = Child Protective Services Law

**DHS** = Department of Human Services

**Safe Church Committee/SCC** = Those individuals designated to serve the Cross Roads Presbyterian Church by implementing, enforcing, and reviewing the Child Protection Policy. They will also maintain appropriate records and make reports to Session about these issues. (For further definition, see chapter 5)

**Un-Approved Adult Volunteer** = a person who may or may not be a member of the congregation who has a specific talent or experience to share with children/youth at a particular event/class. An un-approved adult volunteer's opportunity is temporary and must be supervised by approved adult. (Example: a baker coming to teach the youth group about decorating cakes or a missionary talking to the children about his experiences.)

## **CHILD ABUSE AS DEFINED UNDER PA CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES LAW (CPSL)**

Although this policy focuses primarily on child sexual abuse, all forms of child abuse are prohibited, and are included under this policy. Definitions of abuse from the **Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law (CPSL [Title 23 PA.C.S. Chapter 63]**, are as follows:

- A) Any recent act or failure to act by a perpetrator which causes non-accidental serious physical injury to a child.
- *Serious bodily injury* means bodily injury that creates a substantial risk of death or causes serious permanent disfigurement or protracted loss or impairment of function of any bodily member or organ.
  - *Serious physical injury* means an injury that causes a child severe pain or significantly impairs a child's physical functioning, either temporarily or permanently.
- B) An act or failure to act by a perpetrator which causes non-accidental serious mental injury to a child.  
*Serious mental injury* means a psychological condition, as diagnosed by a physician or licensed psychologist, including the refusal of appropriate treatment, that:
- Renders a child chronically and severely anxious, agitated, depressed, socially withdrawn, psychotic, or in reasonable fear that his or her life or safety is threatened
  - Seriously interferes with a child's ability to accomplish age-appropriate development and social tasks
- C) Sexual Abuse or Exploitation: (1) the employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of a child to engage in or assist another individual to engage in sexually explicit conduct. (2) The employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of a child to engage in or assist another individual to engage in simulation of sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing visual depiction, including photographing, videotaping, computer depicting, and filming. It also includes any of the following offenses committed against a child: rape, sexual assault, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse, aggravated indecent assault, molestation, incest, indecent exposure, prostitution, sexual abuse, or sexual exploitation.
- D) Endangering Welfare of Children: A recent act, failure to act or series of the acts or failures to act by a perpetrator which creates an imminent risk of serious physical injury to or sexual abuse or exploitation of a child. A parent, guardian, or other person supervising the welfare of a child less than 18 years of age, or a person that employs or supervises such a person commits an offense if he knowingly endangers the welfare of the child by violating a duty of care, protection, or support.
- E) Serious physical neglect by a perpetrator constituting prolonged or repeated lack of supervision or the failure to provide the essentials of life, including adequate medical care, which endangers a child's life or development or impairs the child's functioning.
- A child will not be deemed to be physically or mentally abused based on injuries that result solely from environmental factors that are beyond the control of the parent or person responsible for the child's welfare, such as inadequate housing, furnishings, income, clothing and medical care.

Any recent act or failure to act is defined as occurring within the last two years.  
The definition of abuse, as listed above, is the definition provided by the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law (CPSL [Title 23 PA.C.S. Chapter 63] at the time of the publication of

this policy. Any changes in this definition by PA CPSL will result in the corresponding changes to this document.

### **SELECTION OF APPROVED ADULTS**

To protect the children/youth in our care, the following guidelines are established for those who desire to work with children/youth less than 18 years of age.

#### **Approved Adults must:**

1. Complete an Approved Adult application form and the required clearance forms. Clearances are required for all applicants. The applicant is responsible for paying any filing fees for clearances. If there is a hardship, and you are unable to pay these fees, please discuss with the Director of Children's Ministries for assistance.
2. Attend a standard initial training session and updated sessions as required.
3. Sign and comply with the Child Protection Covenant.

#### **Required Application Forms to Become an Approved Adult**

The following forms are located in the APPENDIX:

1. Form 1 Application to become an Approved Adult
2. Form 2 Letter of Acceptance as an Approved Adult
3. Form 3 Approved Adult Covenant of Child Protection
4. Form 4 Pennsylvania State Police Request for Criminal Records Check Form
5. Form 5 Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance Form
6. Form 6 FBI Criminal History Clearance Form (Required only if adult has lived in PA for less than 10 consecutive years.)

#### **Required Clearances**

Church volunteers are required by the Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) to obtain clearances. CROSS ROADS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH requires volunteers to obtain the following clearances:

Child Abuse History Clearance Form (CY-113)

Pennsylvania State Police Request for Criminal Record Check Form (SP4-164)

FBI Criminal History Clearance Form (\*Only if adult has lived in PA for less than 10 years.)

Clearances must be renewed every 5 years; or after a break in service of more than one year. This one-year rule applies to anyone who is not active in Cross Roads Presbyterian Church in any way and has not kept in contact with Cross Roads Presbyterian Church in any way.

Volunteers that have obtained the above clearances through other employment or volunteer work may submit copies of such clearances to the Church as long as they were obtained within the past two years. Anyone with clearances older than this must obtain new clearances for working with children in the church.

Prospective employees applying to engage in occupations with a significant likelihood or regular contact with children, in the form of care, guidance, supervision or training must obtain new clearances as a condition of employment. This would include (for example) a Christian Education Director, Youth Pastor, and other church staff expected to have regular contact with children. All employees are required by the CPSL to obtain clearances.

**All church staff with a significant likelihood of contact with children must also obtain FBI clearance (fingerprinting) in addition to the above clearances regardless if they have lived in the state for over ten years.**

## **RECORDS**

Applications and related forms for staff and volunteers will be locked in a confidential file under the jurisdiction of the Director of Children's Ministries. Clearances are confidential and will only be made available to a pastor under "call" to the congregation and to the chair of the SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE. The Director of Children's Ministries is responsible for maintaining records and following these recordkeeping steps:

1. Create and maintain a master list of all personnel and volunteers who have regular contact with children in the course of their work
2. Determine which reports you possess, and note the dates of the reports on the list;
  - For staff and volunteers who have the required background check reports and those reports are less than five (5) years old, no new reports are required until five (5) years from the date of the existing reports.
  - For such personnel and volunteers who do not have the required background check reports, or in cases where the required reports are over five (5) years old, new reports are required.
3. Note on the list when the reports need to be renewed, and note on the list the date 60 days before to initiate the process of obtaining renewed reports
  - New reports are to be obtained every five (5) years from the date of the existing reports.
  - New reports are required for all personnel and volunteers who have a year break in continuous service. (This one year rule applies to anyone who is not active in Cross Roads Presbyterian Church in any way and has not kept in contact with our Cross Roads Presbyterian Church in any way.)
4. Retain copies of all reports, even ones that are superseded by renewed reports, in confidential locked files.

## **RECORD RETENTION**

Because any records pertaining to children and youth; and staff/volunteers who work with them may become the subject of legal proceedings at some future date, no such records should be part of any automatic records destruction plan by the church. This includes child and youth registration and permission forms, as well as staff and volunteer clearances. Such records should only be destroyed with the written approval of the SCC, and in accordance with the state statute of limitations related to sexual abuse of minors. In PA, the statute for filing criminal and civil charges for certain types of sexual abuse of a minor extends to 50 years past the victim's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Records may be digitized and stored electronically.

## **CHURCH KEY POLICY – (Form 7 Key Receipt Form and Statement of Compliance - - SEE APPENDIX)**

As our church building is used by a variety of outside organizations, it is important to have a policy as to who has access to the building. This is for the safety of our children, adults, and our property. We want to deter anyone from coming into the building without our knowing, hiding in unlocked rooms, stealing, or laying in wait to attack an unsuspecting individual.

1. Certain people are authorized by virtue of their position in the church to hold keys. These people include, but are not limited to, paid employees, officers of the church, committee chairs, youth group leaders, and any other leaders of approved organizations using our building. Cross Roads Session will approve the list of positions to whom keys are given and their current holders once each year. (See building policy)

2. Any other person who seeks possession of a key to the church facilities will have a clearly stated reason for needing a key and will need to be approved by the session.
3. All keys shall be of a type that cannot be duplicated, in order to eliminate unauthorized reproduction.
4. The keys will be assigned by the Office Coordinator, following approval of the recipient by the Cross Roads Session. Office Coordinator will distribute or arrange for the distribution of the keys once they are assigned. If there is a need for additional keys, the Office Coordinator will obtain new keys with Church Session approval.
5. Records of key holders will be maintained by the church's Office Coordinator and kept on file. Keys shall be returned when they are no longer needed by the holder and the return will be documented.
6. It will be the responsibility of the Office Coordinator to monitor who is in possession of keys and request the return of keys from persons no longer authorized to hold them. Keys are not to be loaned to unauthorized persons, duplicated, or kept beyond the time that they are needed. Authorized Youth leaders may share a key as long as each leader has signed the Key Receipt Form and the Statement of Compliance.
7. Key holders will be required to sign and submit a Key Receipt Form and the Statement of Compliance. (Form 7 SEE APPENDIX)
8. No key holder will use his/her key to access the church with a child or children not his or her own (or of whom the key holder is not a legal guardian or foster parent of) at a time when there is no church related activity being held in which the child and the key holder are involved. This is intended to prevent a situation where an adult key holder is alone with a child in the facility. In the rare case an exception is to be made to this provision, a written note from the child's parent or legal guardian must be submitted to the church office and approved by the Safe Church Committee prior to entry.
9. If any property and/or facility of Cross Roads Presbyterian Church is unlocked by the key holder, the key holder will be responsible to:
  - a. Lock any room the key holder has opened unless informed by Cross Roads Presbyterian Church staff or other leaders to keep the room open.
  - b. Check to see if he or she is the last one in the building and if that is the case, check that ALL doors are locked.
  - c. If the key holder is with a group, the key holder must check to see if any other groups/individuals are in the building. If there are none, the key holder must be the last to leave, making sure that all doors in the building are locked.
  - d. If key holder is leaving and other church representatives are still in the building, the key holder must notify those representatives that he/she is leaving.

### **Statement of Compliance for Outside Organization Using Church Facilities**

Cross Roads Presbyterian Church is committed to providing a safe environment for all children, youth and volunteers who participate in ministries and programs at our facilities. Prior to approval to use this building, each outside organization will need to be given a copy of our most recent Child Protection Policy to review and must fill out Form 8 Statement of Compliance for Outside Organization Using Church Facilities (SEE APPENDIX) This will need to be completed on an annual basis as our policy may change.

1. The following questions must be answered in order to obtain consent for use of the church's facilities.
  - A. Have you received and read the Cross Roads Presbyterian Church Child Protection Policy?
  - B. Does your group have a policy and procedures for practicing safe ministry?
  - C. If yes, your group must provide to Cross Roads Presbyterian Church a copy for review.
  
2. Stipulations: If the organization's policy does not include a "two adult" rule; clearances and training for volunteers; procedures for immediate reporting of suspected child abuse to Childline; and a prohibition on being alone in the facility with a child not your own, the organization is expected to comply with these provisions as stated in Cross Roads Presbyterian child protection policy.
  - A. If the organization does not have a policy, the group is required to abide by the church's written policy and procedures as would reasonably apply to the organization.
  - B. The organization will be asked to describe how it will implement this policy and procedures with its program.
  - C. The organization will have a representative sign the following.
    - I have received and read the Child Protection policy of Cross Roads Presbyterian Church or provided evidence of our own policy. Any questions that I have were answered to my satisfaction. On behalf of my organization, I agree to observe and abide by the tenets of the policy/stipulations.
    - I certify that I am empowered to sign this document on behalf of my organization and agree that my organization does hereby indemnify, defend and hold harmless Cross Roads Presbyterian Church from and against any and all claims arising out of my organization's use of facilities.

The organization's own policy has been reviewed and is acceptable. \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  
Comments:

# Cross Roads Presbyterian Church Children and Youth Protection Policy Chapter Two

## Guidelines and Registration/Permission Information

### GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

To ensure that a nurturing Christian environment for children/youth is maintained within the congregation, to protect children/youth who participate in activities sponsored by the church from sexual, mental, and/or physical abuse, and to protect the congregation's members from false allegations of abuse, the congregation has adopted the following policy:

- 1. Child Abuse Prohibited:** Those who accept the special responsibility of working with the congregation's children/youth shall not violate that responsibility by causing physical injury, which is non-accidental; mental injury, which is non-accidental; sexual abuse or serious physical neglect of children/youth; or any other act described as child abuse in this policy or the laws of our state.
- 2. Sexual Abuse Prohibited:** Those who accept the special responsibility of working with the congregation's children/youth shall not violate that responsibility by having any interaction with a child/youth where the child/youth is being used for sexual stimulation of the adult or a third person regardless of whether or not the behavior involves touching, or any other act described as sexual abuse in this policy or the laws of our state.
- 3. Two Approved Adults Rule:** Two approved adults should be present during any church sponsored children/youth activity. (The only standard exception to the "two approved adults" policy is in the youth mentoring program – see page 15)

In some instances where unforeseen circumstances result in two approved adults not being present (for example, an unexpected absence of a teacher on a Sunday morning), a designated approved adult will circulate outside the classroom area or be within easy reach to provide assistance if needed. In a mixed group, whenever possible, a male and a female approved adult should be present. Helpers (youth under age 18 caring for children up to age 12) or occasional care assistants may work under the supervision of approved adults.

- 4. Visibility:** All activities/meetings with children/youth must be conducted in a way that allows visibility, e.g., glass areas of doors should not be obstructed, curtains/blinds should be open, when possible, door should be open or a window should allow easy observation of the room. Where possible, conduct activities in a public place, with another person within sight and sound of the activities. Confidential pastoral counseling of youth is permissible so long as the pastor is in sight of, but not hearing of another adult.

Because abuse is sometimes perpetuated by an older, stronger child/youth, do not send two children/youth with a four or more year age difference to an isolated setting, e.g., bathroom, tent, empty classroom.

- 5. Bathroom and Diapering:** In general, children should be encouraged to use the bathroom before and after classes or other activities. In this way, parents can assist as needed.

If you need to take a child to the toilet, be aware of your visibility and the child's privacy, e.g., adult stands holding public bathroom door open while child enters toilet stall alone.

- 6. Empty Room Policy:** After an activity, check rooms to ensure that all participants have vacated the room. Lock rooms if not returning.
- 7. Expressions of Affection:** True expressions of affection toward children/youth can be a manifestation of Christ's love for all of us. A kind word of encouragement to a child/youth or a pat on the back can be a small but significant act for both the adult and the child/youth. That being said, adults must use caution and common sense when physically expressing affection toward children/youth.
- Respect a child's/youth's refusal of affection
  - Be aware of appropriate hand placement. A child/youth or an observer could misinterpret a pat on the bottom or a bear hug. Note that a touch on private areas, those areas covered by a bathing suit; or a kiss on the mouth is inappropriate.

## **PERMISSION SLIPS, OVERNIGHT ACTIVITIES, TRANSPORTATION**

### **1. Permission Slips:**

- Form 9 – Child and Youth Registration Form- Children/youth must have permission to participate in all church activities. Parents/guardians need to complete and return a Form 9 - Child and Youth Registration Form, which includes pertinent medical information, emergency phone numbers, a medical release, photo release, and general permission for field trips. These forms will be updated annually and filed in the church office. (SEE APPENDIX)
- Forms for field trips and overnights: Children/youth must have specific permission to participate in any overnight activity or any activity that takes place away from church grounds. The permission must be written, signed by a parent or guardian, and must identify the activity in which the child/youth will be participating. All youth participating in a youth group overnight or are going on a field trip/mission trip must have these three forms on file before they will be allowed to participate
  - Form 9 – Child and Youth Registration Form
  - Form 10 - Permission Form for Trips and Overnights
  - Form 11 – Child/Youth/Parent/Church Covenant
  - Each time a trip or overnight event occurs, a copy of each completed Form 10 must be kept with an adult leader while the original remains in a secure file located in the Church office.

- 2. Overnight Activities:** Overnight activities involving children/youth shall be chaperoned by at least two approved adults. Boys and girls will sleep in separate areas with at least two approved adults of the same gender directly supervising each group. With parent approval, an alternate arrangement for the minimum supervision of children/youth is permissible.

3. **Transportation of Children/Youth:** When children/youth are transported for church activities they shall be transported in groups with at least one approved adult in each vehicle. Any alternate transportation must be by written consent from the guardian.
4. **Personal Vehicle Transportation:** To transport children/youth in a personal vehicle, the driver must be 25 years of age or older, excluding staff. Drivers must have a copy of their driver's license, registration, and proof of insurance on file in the church office. Anyone who has had their license revoked or suspended within the past five years will be ineligible to drive for youth activities. Any alternate transportation must be by written consent from the guardian.

### **NURSERY PROTECTION GUIDELINES**

The nursery of Cross Roads Church is designed to provide a place of safety and caring for our youngest church participants, while allowing their parents to participate in worship or activities. As such, the following policy is designed to protect the children, parents and volunteers who participate:

1. **Forms:** Parents will complete a Form 13 – Nursery Registration Form when the child first enters care and will also receive a copy of the Form 12 - Nursery Guidelines for Parents. (SEE APPENDIX)
2. **Sign-In:** Parents must sign children in and out using Form 14 - Nursery Sign-In Sheet each time children are delivered to care. Children will only be released to those listed on the sign-in sheet and who have the pager that corresponds to the sheet.
3. **Pagers:** Each guardian who drops off a child will receive a pager. This pager must be kept with the guardian at all times. If the pager lights up, that is an indication to come to the nursery as soon as possible. If by chance we do not see you in a timely manner, we will call using the number on the sign in sheet as we will assume that your pager has malfunctioned or you did not notice it going off. Your child will not be given to anyone who does not have a pager and is not listed on the sign-in sheet or the emergency contact form.
4. **Parent/Guardian ALWAYS on premise:** At least one parent/guardian shall remain in the church while the child is in the nursery until child is picked up.
5. **Food and Drink:** Parents must label all bottles, juices, blankets, toys and any other personal belongings. Pacifiers should be attached to the child. Only dry food snacks are allowed in the nursery. **Snacks containing nuts are never allowed due to allergies.** Small snack items that can be choked on, such as grapes, are not permitted.
6. **Pick Up:** Children must be picked up immediately following service, extended Sunday morning time, or immediately after church activities and checked out in the log by a parent/guardian, a person listed on the sign in sheet, or a person designated on the emergency contact form.

7. **Discipline Plan:** Setting limits is directed toward maximizing the growth and development of the children and is for protecting the group and the individuals within it.
  - a. Positive reinforcement is the major tool of appropriate discipline.
  - b. Volunteers will verbalize to the child when she/he is behaving in an inappropriate manner.
  - c. Volunteers will redirect a child who appears to be “headed for trouble.”
  - d. If a child is repeatedly displaying inappropriate behavior and redirecting has not worked, parents/guardian will be asked to come to the nursery.
  - e. Nursery volunteers **WILL NOT:**
    - i. Use corporal punishment, including spanking
    - ii. Subject children to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation or verbal abuse
    - iii. Deny any child food as a form of punishment
    - iv. Punish any child for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.
  
8. **Diapering:**
  - a. When diapering the child at the diapering station next to the door, make sure that the blind is closed to protect the child’s privacy.
  - b. Any time a child needs to be changed, the child should be changed in the same area where another Volunteer/Staff is present.
  - c. Please use diapers and wipes provided by the parents. If none are provided a limited supply is located under the changing area.
  - d. Change diapers as follows:
    - i. Obtain all necessary supplies
    - ii. Place two paper towels under the baby
    - iii. Put on gloves
    - iv. Change diaper
    - v. Put child back in the play area
    - vi. Place the soiled diaper in two plastic bags and dispose in the garbage can with the lid
    - vii. Clean the changing area with disinfectant
    - viii. Wash hands
    - ix. If the child needs a change of clothes, there are extra clothes in the storage area in the white drawers. Bring the child with you to the storage area.
    - x. **NEVER LEAVE A CHILD ON THE CHANGING TABLE UNACCOMPANIED.**
  
9. **Bathroom Usage:**
  - a. If a child needs to use to the bathroom, an approved volunteer/staff shall accompany him/her.
  - b. The volunteer/staff will stay outside of the door and let the child use the toilet.
  - c. If help is needed with wiping or dressing, the volunteer/staff will help the child while keeping the door to the bathroom open. Encourage the child to wipe him/herself.
  - d. The volunteer/staff will let the parent know that the child used the toilet and whether or not assistance was needed.
  - e. The volunteer/staff and the child will wash their hands thoroughly with soap and running water.
  - f. If a problem arises when a child needs to use the toilet, a parent will be contacted.

10. **Physical or Health Incident:** Should an incident occur that results in physical injury, parent(s) will be notified and a Form 15 -Cross Roads Child-Youth Incident Report (SEE APPENDIX) will be completed.

### **CHILDREN AND YOUTH CLASSROOM PROTECTION GUIDELINES**

Cross Roads Church is committed to creating a safe and healthy environment in which young people can learn about and experience God's love. It is the policy of the church to provide adequate supervision for all classroom activities. We also expect all volunteers/staff who work with minors to complete and submit an application to be approved adults.

1. **Registration:** Parents will complete a Form 9 – Child and Youth Registration Form (SEE APPENDIX) when a child first enters an education classroom. Children will only be released to those persons listed on the form.
2. **Policy Given To Parents:** Copies of this policy referring to general or specific protection guidelines will be provided to the parents of children attending Cross Roads Presbyterian Church children or youth activities.
3. **Classroom: When possible,** every classroom shall meet the appropriate supervision ratios stated on Table 1: Appropriate Supervision Ratios (see Table One on page 9).
4. **Bathroom:** Children in grades 3-12 can use the bathrooms unescorted, provided they return within a reasonable time frame. This privilege can be granted or rescinded at the teacher's discretion.
  - a. No volunteer/staff shall be alone with a child in the bathroom for purposes of toileting, clean up from craft or art projects, or care of injury, except when necessary.
  - b. In this case the door to the bathroom and classroom shall be kept open.
  - c. Normally, volunteer/staff who accompany a child to the bathroom should remain outside the bathroom door while the child is inside.
  - d. If a child needs assistance with dressing, undressing or cleanup, two approved adults shall be present .
  - e. If a child needs assistance with dressing, undressing or cleanup, and only one approved adult is available, the door to the bathroom shall be left open.
  - f. If a child needs assistance, the Volunteer/Staff will notify the guardian at pickup.
5. **Never Alone:** No volunteer/staff working with our children shall place him/herself in a compromising situation by being alone with a child or children out of sight of other teachers or aides.
  - a. If for any reason, a volunteer/staff is left alone in a classroom, the classroom door shall remain ajar.
6. **Physical Injury or Health Issue:** Should an incident occur that results in physical injury or a health issue guardians will be notified and a Form 15 - Cross Roads Child-Youth Incident Report (SEE APPENDIX) will be completed.

7. **Leaving Church Grounds:** When volunteers/staff take a class off of the church grounds, they must have these forms for each child/youth:
  - a. Form 9 – Child and Youth Registration Form
  - b. Form 10 - Permission Form for Trips and Overnights
  - c. Form 11 – Child/Youth/Parent/Church Covenant

The original of each completed form will be kept in a secure file in the Church office.

If the child/youth is new to the group they can forgo forms 9 and 11 for the event, providing it is not an overnight activity and verbal permission is granted by their parent /guardian. If the youth wishes to continue activity with the group in the future, all forms must be submitted prior to the next activity. Parents/Guardians should notify the staff/volunteers of any medical/allergy information of which they should be aware for the child/youth's safety.

8. **Discipline Plan:** Setting limits is directed toward maximizing the growth and development of the children and is for protecting the group and the individuals within it.
  - a. Positive reinforcement is the major tool of appropriate discipline.
  - b. Volunteers/Staff will verbalize to the child when she/he is behaving in an inappropriate manner.
  - c. Volunteers/Staff will redirect a child who appears to be "headed for trouble."
  - d. If a child is repeatedly displaying inappropriate behavior and redirecting has not worked, the parent will be notified.
  - e. If the child's behavior is endangering any other person or him/herself, the child will be brought to the parent immediately or the parent will be called.
  - f. The volunteer/staff will pass on information of repeated inappropriate behavior to the Director of Children's Ministries or Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries.
  - g. Volunteers/Staff **WILL NOT**:
    - i. Use corporal punishment, including spanking
    - ii. Subject children to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation or verbal abuse
    - iii. Deny any child food as a form of punishment
    - iv. Punish any child for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.
9. **Inappropriate Conduct:** Any inappropriate conduct or relationship between a volunteer/staff and a child/youth should be promptly reported to a member of the Safe Church Committee.

### **YOUTH CONFIRMATION MENTORING PROGRAM**

Youth mentors are approved adults that are chosen by youth and approved by the Director of Youth and Youth Adult Ministries to provide friendship and companionship for youth throughout their teenage years. Mentors are offered to youth to facilitate their spiritual growth and maturity, complementing the role of parents. These relationships are an exception to the policy of needing 2 approved adults present for all activities with youth. This exception is addressed by the following policies:

1. Mentor and mentee will each keep a log of the times and places they meet. The child's parent or legal guardian will initial the log the child keeps after each meeting; the Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries will initial the log the adult keeps after each meeting. The logs will include designation of the date/time/place/duration and purpose of the meeting, and will be provided to mentors in their training session. All logs are to be handed in to the church Directory of Youth and Young Adult Ministries upon request. Form 16 - Youth-Mentor Log (SEE APPENDIX)

2. All mentoring with children or youth should always occur in a mutually pre-approved date, time, and location agreed upon by all of the involved parties.
3. Mentors are not to engage children/youth in counseling that requires professional help. For example – drug or alcohol addiction, sexual assault by a dating partner; severe problems with parental relationships, sustained depression or chronic anxiety, eating disorders, suicidal tendencies, etc. The need for formal or professional counseling should be turned over to the pastoral team.

# **Cross Roads Presbyterian Church Children and Youth Protection Policy Chapter Three**

## **Mandated Reporting, Investigation, Documentation, and Response**

### **HOW “MANDATED” REPORTING WORKS IN PA**

Anyone may report suspected child abuse. However, the PA Child Protective Service Law (CPSL) imposes a reporting mandate, or requirement, on:

1. Any adult who comes into contact with children in the course of his or her work or professional practice, specifically including
2. “clergyman, priest, rabbi, minister, Christian Science practitioner, religious healer, or spiritual leader of any regularly established church or other religious organization,” and
3. “An individual, paid or unpaid, who, on the basis of the individual's role as an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity or service, is a person responsible for the child’s welfare or has direct contact with children.”
4. These (ABOVE MENTIONED) adults are known as “mandated reporters.”

### **MANDATED REPORTERS IN CHURCH**

Church staff that should be considered mandated reporters under the CPSL would include those who routinely come into contact with children, such as

1. Pastors, music ministers, youth directors and any other paid staff expected to come into contact with children on a regular basis, as well as their supervisors.
2. Volunteers who accept the responsibility of caring for children (“Approved Adults” under this policy) are also considered mandated reporters under the CPSL beginning December 31, 2014.

### **NON – MANDATED REPORTERS**

Staff or volunteers whose job or service responsibilities do not include care or direct contact with children as defined by the CPSL (such as most administrative or custodial staff, kitchen workers, adult ministry volunteers) are not considered mandated reporters unless they supervise those who are.

### **WHEN TO REPORT**

The CPSL stipulates that a report is required when

1. The mandated reporter comes into contact with the child in the course of employment, occupation and practice of a profession or through a regularly scheduled program, activity or service;
2. The mandated reporter is directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or training of the child or is affiliated with an agency, institution, organization, school, regularly established church or religious organization, or other entity that is directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or training of the child; and,
3. The mandated reporter has reasonable cause to believe that a child under the care, supervision, guidance or training of the church or the reporter, has been abused.
4. The following two items require a report, regardless of whether the child is under the care of the reporter, or the church:
  - a. A person makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that an identifiable child is the victim of child abuse; or

- b. An individual 14 years of age or older makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that the individual has committed child abuse.

### **CHILDREN CONSIDERED UNDER CARE OR SUPERVISION OF A CHURCH**

Examples of children considered by the CPSL to be under the care or supervision of a church would include

1. pre-school or other students,
2. children enrolled in child-care programs,
3. children being “babysat” during worship services or gatherings,
4. children participating in educational, sports, music, recreational or other church ministries such as summer camp, Bible school, youth group, etc.

### **WHAT MANDATED REPORTERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT ABUSE REPORTING**

1. The mandate to report applies to all suspected child abuse, not just abuse that has been perpetrated by someone within the church.
2. Possible abusers could include, for example,
  - a. parents
  - b. relatives,
  - c. older siblings,
  - d. neighbors,
  - e. coaches,
  - f. school teachers,
  - g. family friends and
  - h. other children.
3. If neither the victim nor the alleged offender is connected with the church, the mandated reporter does not need to notify the church or complete internal church policy requirements BUT STILL NEEDS TO REPORT TO THE AUTHORITIES.
4. A mandated reporter need not be able to determine who is responsible for the abuse, i.e., identify the alleged offender.
5. A mandated reporter need not make a first-hand observation of the suspected child abuse victim.
6. The CPSL specifically grants legal immunity to any individual who, in good faith, makes a report of suspected child abuse.
7. Failure to report suspected abuse by a mandated reporter can result in charges and fines. A mandated reporter may also be charged as a “perpetrator” in some cases for failure to protect a child.
8. The new law also specifically preserves previous law on confidential communications to clergy. G-4.0302 of the Book of Order includes the following statement on mandatory reporting, which is binding on this congregation:  
“Any member of this church engaged in ordered ministry and any certified Christian educator employed by this church or its congregations, shall report to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities knowledge of harm, or the risk of harm, related to the physical

abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity when (1) such information is gained outside of a confidential communication as defined in G-4.0301, (2) she or he is not bound by an obligation of privileged communication under law, or (3) she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of future physical harm or abuse. Persons being counseled by church staff should understand that reporting of child abuse is required by law.”

### **REPORTING AND DOCUMENTING SUSPECTED ABUSE - Overview**

An overview of the action steps and the sequence in which they must be taken is provided below, with details in the following section of policy. Again, if neither the victim nor the alleged offender is connected with the church, the mandated reporter does not need to notify the church or complete internal church policy requirements.

1. The mandated reporter must “immediately” report to ChildLine, 800-932-0313. (Legal requirement)
2. The reporter must then “immediately thereafter” inform the SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE a report has been made. (Legal requirement)
3. The reporter must complete Form 18 - Internal Child Abuse Incident Report and give it to the SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE. (SEE APPENDIX)
4. The reporter must complete and file a written Form 17 - CY47 report with local CPS (Child Protection Service) within 48 hours after making an oral report to ChildLine. An electronic report does not require a written Form 17 - CY47. (SEE APPENDIX) (Legal requirement)
5. The reporter must provide a copy of the Form 17 - CY47 report to the SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE along with documentation of when it was filed.
6. The Department of Human Services (DHS) will inform the reporter of the investigation results no later than 3 days after it is concluded, which is generally within 30-60 days.
7. The reporter will then inform the SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE of the results.
8. The SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE will note on the Form 18 - Internal Child Abuse Incident Report the date the results were provided by the reporter, and file any related documentation.

### **REPORTING & DOCUMENTING SUSPECTED ABUSE –Detail**

1. An employee or an Approved Adult who has reasonable cause to suspect that a child/youth has been abused by anyone (including but not limited to the child/youth’s family, guardians, church staff member, an Approved Adult or volunteer) or who receives a specific disclosure as previously described in this policy shall make an immediate and direct report of suspected child abuse to ChildLine either electronically at [www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis](http://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis) or by calling 1-800-932-0313, the Pennsylvania ChildLine and Abuse Registry (ChildLine) as required by law. The legal reporting obligation is met by contacting ChildLine, either electronically or by telephone. However, as of 12/31/14, there is “no wrong door” for reporting, and mandated reporters that make reports directly to local Child Protective Services or the police will not be in technical violation of the law.

2. The legal obligation of the mandated reporter as of 12/31/14 (including volunteers, i.e., “Approved Adults”) is to “REPORT IMMEDIATELY” to ChildLine and immediately THEREAFTER notify the SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE. The mandated reporter must provide his/her name, telephone number and email address when making the report to ChildLine.
3. The reporter shall then document the suspected abuse by completing a Form 18 - Internal Child Abuse Incident Report (SEE APPENDIX). The SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE will then have the responsibility for facilitating the cooperation of the church with the investigation of the ChildLine report.
4. INVESTIGATING CHILD ABUSE - Neither the mandated reporter nor the church is responsible for investigating or determining whether or not abuse has occurred prior to making a report. The standard under the law for reporting is that “a reasonable person has cause to believe the child has been abused.” It may be necessary to ask the child or person alleging the abuse has occurred for some clarification solely in order to determine if there is cause to believe abuse may have occurred. Detailed interviews and extensive questioning with the child and/or the alleged abuser should be conducted by legal authorities, not the church.
5. If a child is injured or in pain, call 911 for an ambulance. If anyone is in immediate physical danger, call 911 for police assistance.
6. Following the required oral or electronic notification to ChildLine, your local Children and Youth Agency may also be contacted by the Pastor or SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE or the reporter, as this follow-up call puts the reporter directly in touch with the persons who are familiar with the community and will be taking action on the report made to ChildLine. This may also facilitate a faster response.
7. Within 48 hours of the oral report to ChildLine, the mandated reporter who made the original report must complete a written or electronic report of the suspected abuse on Form - 17 CY-47 (SEE APPENDIX), based on the mandated report and Form 18 - Internal Child Abuse Incident Report (SEE APPENDIX) of the Approved Adult or volunteer and send it your County agency. If the original report was electronic, the follow up report is not needed. This is a legally required report.
8. The reporter shall notify SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE and /or appropriate staff member of the date the written report on Form-17 CY-47 was sent and provide a copy for the church records.
9. The staff person so notified may also report reasonable suspicions directly to ChildLine; however, such a report does not relieve the obligation under this policy of the original reporter to inform SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE and /or appropriate staff member and complete a Form – 17 CY-47 and a Form 18 - Internal Child Abuse Incident Report.
10. The initiative for investigating alleged abuse resides with the Department of Human Services (DHS) and/or law enforcement, and shall not be carried out by the congregation. There is no requirement that multiple reports of the same alleged incident(s) of abuse be filed by the church.

11. All allegations of child/youth abuse or serious physical neglect will be taken seriously by the pastor(s) and the SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE. These allegations will be treated in strict confidence. All reporting steps taken will be documented, including a log of phone calls, personal visits, and written reports. Documentation should be kept in a secure file in the Church office.
12. All communications regarding the report of suspected child abuse shall attempt to protect the dignity and privacy of those persons affected by the report including the alleged child/youth victim and the person suspected of child abuse, while at the same time ensuring that persons in responsibility and law enforcement authorities remain fully informed.
13. The name of the mandated reporter and anyone who cooperates in an investigation should also remain confidential. Release of the name of the mandated reporter or anyone who cooperates in an investigation is prohibited by law.

#### **FOLLOW-UP, INVESTIGATION, DOCUMENTATION**

1. Following placement of the call to report suspected abuse to ChildLine, the SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE and /or appropriate staff member will inform the parent (provided that neither of the custodial parents is suspected of abuse), being careful not to reveal the identity of the mandated reporter. If the alleged abuser is a custodial parent, or resides in the same household as the child, his or her first contact about the allegation should come from either Child & Youth Services or the police, not the church.
2. The church should not enter into discussion with the alleged abuser after a report has been filed and during the course of the legal investigation about the details of the complaint. The alleged abuser will be removed from any position in which he or she has supervisory authority over children pending the completion of the investigation.
3. The liability insurance carrier and Pittsburgh Presbytery should be contacted by the Safe Church Committee or appropriate staff member after the report is filed as a matter of routine practice if the alleged abuse involves a staff person, if the abuse occurred on church property, or if the abuse involved a volunteer caregiver. The alleged abuser will have his/her ministry restricted to exclude contact with children immediately; and if employed by the church, may be placed on paid leave for a designated period of time during the investigation.
4. The Department of Human Services has 3 days from the date it receives the "results" of the investigation based on the report to inform the mandated reporter (NOT the church) as to:
  - the final status of the child abuse report, in other words, whether it is indicated, founded or unfounded and
  - Any services provided, arranged for or to be provided by the county agency to protect the child.
5. In accordance with this policy, the mandated reporter will share the above with SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE as soon as practicable after receiving results from DHS. Investigations are to be concluded by CPS in 30 or 60 days. The SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE will indicate in the space provided on the Form 18 – Internal Child Abuse

Incident Report the date that the mandated reporter provided the information (if applicable) and file any documentation with the report.

6. If an incident is reported that does not rise to the level of making a mandated report, the Safe Church Committee will inform the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) of the concern and document the meeting.

### **SHARING INFORMATION**

1. The extent to which information will be shared with the congregation will be determined by the SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE and others as appropriate. The input of the PITTSBURGH PRESBYTERY may be sought and, if pastoral staff is involved, the SYNOD may be consulted in making this decision. The identity of the victim and the mandated reporter are confidential by law and it is legally prohibited to share their identities.
2. All necessary parties will cooperate with the investigations made by the police.
3. The SESSION OF CROSS ROADS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH will authorize the SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE to act as the official spokesperson for the congregation. Only the authorized person or persons may speak for the congregation to the news media, government agencies, attorneys, or others.

### **CONTINUING THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH**

1. Pastoral support will be offered to all parties involved, including those who have made the complaint, the alleged abuser, the families of both, and the congregation. Decisions about how this support will be given will be made by pastoral staff, the session, and the SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE.
2. If the allegations involve pastoral staff, the ministry of the church will need to be maintained while the issue is being addressed. Decisions regarding how this will be accomplished will be made by the SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE, the Session with assistance from the PITTSBURGH PRESBYTERY.

### **RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS/ADMISSIONS; OR CRIMINAL CHARGES**

1. Persons who admit to or plead guilty to or are convicted in a court of law of any form of physical or sexual abuse of a child/youth will be immediately, permanently, and completely disqualified by the SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE from working with children/youth in the congregation.
2. Persons who admit to a Pastor or any member of the SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE any type of physical or sexual abuse of a child/youth but who have not appeared in a court of law will be disqualified from working with children/youth in the congregation.
3. Allegations of sexual or physical abuse of anyone shall disqualify any person from working with children/youth until an investigation is completed.
4. If an arrest has been made and charges filed by the police for any violent crime, including any physical or sexual abuse of anyone, the volunteer or staff person will be immediately removed from any susceptible environments with children or vulnerable populations until the investigation and legal process are complete. This serves not only

as protection to children and vulnerable others but also as protection for the person alleged to have transgressed, as such a person is often highly vulnerable to accusations of inappropriate conduct based on perception of risk, which may or may not be well-founded.

5. An Approved Adult or staff member who is under investigation for alleged abuse, or criminally charged for an offense involving a child is required to notify the SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE or a supervising staff member as soon as the investigation begins.
6. The SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE may temporarily or permanently disqualify any person(s) from working with children/youth, as the committee deems appropriate. Effective 12/31/14, certain offenses automatically disqualify anyone from working in a paid or unpaid position with children. (SEE SUPPLEMENTS)

#### **VIOLATIONS OF CHILD/YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**

1. Alleged violations of the policy, other than abuse, shall be immediately reported to the SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE
2. THE SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE will report it to the SESSION OF CROSS ROADS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, if deemed appropriate.
3. The SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE will investigate the alleged violations of the policy.
4. If a person(s) is found to be in violation of the policy, the SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE will determine what disqualification or disciplinary action, if any, is necessary.
5. Allegations were not Abuse, but a Demonstration of Poor Judgment
  - a. The SAFE CHURCH COMMITTEE will hold the offender responsible and accountable for the behavior. Grace and mercy are extended in the context of repentance, accountability and justice.
  - b. Education and/or counseling will be expected to correct unhealthy behavior patterns. The church may consider helping with the cost of counseling sessions as an extension of the church ministry.
  - c. The offender will be removed from susceptible environments for a stated period of time, and not function in any supervisory capacity over children and youth for at least one year, after which an evaluation determining fitness for this ministry should be made by the Pastoral team.
  - d. The 2<sup>nd</sup> such occurrence of demonstration of "poor judgment" will result in the individual being precluded from any future ministry with children/youth.
  - e. Communicate action taken with complainant and congregation as needed.

# **Cross Roads Presbyterian Church Children and Youth Protection Policy Chapter Four Providing Community for Known Sex Offenders**

***Brothers, if someone is caught in sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently....Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.  
Galatians 6:1-2 (NIV)***

Individuals who have been adjudicated by a court or child protective services findings as sexual offenders and/or have admitted to past sexual abuse of children and are willing to abide by the guidelines set forth in this policy, are welcome to attend worship services and adult educational activities. Such individuals are hereafter referred to as "known sexual offenders" or "offenders".

## **THE MINIMUM GUIDELINES FOR CHURCH PARTICIPATION**

The minimum guidelines by which any known offender may participate in the life of the congregation are set forth below, and shall be incorporated into a covenant specific for the individual offender which is to be signed by the offender prior to participation.

1. Depending on the circumstances and at the discretion of the Safe Church Committee, additional restrictions may be incorporated into an individual covenant.
2. If an individual is on probation or parole, specific provisions related to contact with children, participation in counseling, and others, will be incorporated into the covenant.
3. The individual covenant may also permit participation in additional church activities (other than those involving children) if circumstances warrant.
4. An individual on probation or parole for a child sexual offence may have restrictions placed on church attendance as part of their probation/parole condition. On occasion, an exception to a "no church attendance" provision of probation or parole may be made by an officer of the court, based on the church's capacity to manage the offender in a way that keeps them from contact with children.
5. Any individual on probation or parole must provide the (pastor) with a copy of the probation and parole agreement, including its terms and conditions, as well as the contact information for the parole or probation officer assigned.
6. Offenders are expected to comply fully with all restrictions and requirements placed upon them as a result of any legal actions, and provide the designated Pastor or Safe Church Committee with copies of any judgments, conditions of parole, or other documents in which restrictions on or requirements as a result of convictions or judgments are stated.
7. Offenders are expected to participate in a professional counseling program, specifically addressing their abusive behaviors. Offenders will provide the name of the agency and mental health professional to the Pastor or Safe Church Committee at the time of request for participation. The offender may be asked to periodically sign a limited disclosure authorization for the therapist to verify to the Pastor or Safe Church Committee that the individual is in treatment.

In a case of extreme financial hardship where the offender cannot afford counseling (and is not required by the court to be in counseling) the Pastor or Safe Church Committee will work with the offender to create an alternative plan that may include regular pastoral counseling, participation in a community-based group for sexual offenders.

8. Offenders will not accept any leadership or representational position within or on behalf of this church. Known sexual offenders can never become Approved Adults.
9. A member of The Safe Church Committee will act as a supervisor to any offender participating in the life of the congregation. They will be adults who are not related to the offender. They will receive training by a professional agency that will include information on sexual offender dynamics, the long-term impact of sexual abuse on victims, and any specific conditions related to participation under the specific covenant established. If the offender is on probation or parole, the training may need to be approved by the officer of the court handling the case.
10. The Safe Church Committee will identify a small group of “covenant partners” for offenders. This small group will provide spiritual, emotional and practical support and will meet with the offender on a regular basis. The supervisors and “covenant partners” will not be the same individuals.
11. The offender may participate in worship in the sanctuary and attend adult Sunday school classes. The Safe Church Committee may designate a specific service and time for attendance. Any other activities the offender is permitted to participate in will be detailed in the covenant.
12. The Safe Church Committee will determine what, if any, notification (regarding the presence of the sexual offender) to other involved parties is required based on a case-by-case basis.
13. A covenant partner must accompany the offender at all times when on church property.
14. At no time should the offender deliberately place him or herself in or remain in any location in or around the church facilities which would cause undue distress to others.
15. At least twice each calendar year and as otherwise requested, the offender shall meet with and report to the designated Pastor or Safe Church Committee regarding status of adherence to these guidelines.
16. If the offender should decide to relocate membership (or substantially attend) another congregation, the designated pastor will seek to inform the leadership of that congregation of the conditions of these guidelines.

# **Cross Roads Presbyterian Church**

## **Children and Youth Protection Policy**

### **Chapter Five**

#### **Safe Church Committee**

It is recommended that a new committee be established at Cross Roads, to be named the Safe Church Committee (SCC)

#### **Committee Duties**

- a. Keep up to date clearances and forms
- b. Keep up to date information on changing sexual abuse protection policy regulations
- c. Disseminate information about policy changes
- d. Educate church community about our policy
  - i. Through pamphlets, posters, and other literature
  - ii. Mandatory training offered 1x a year for all people working with youth
  - iii. Bringing in speakers to educate on specific subjects.
  - iv. Leading a church wide program to teach children how to keep themselves safe
- e. Manage all records of clearances and forms for amount of time allotted by law. (Currently 50 years)
- f. Keep records of all allegations

#### **Committee Members**

This committee should consist of the following participants, with a quorum being 3. All have voice and vote.

- a. Director of Children's Ministry
- b. Director of Youth and Young Adults
- c. Preschool Staff or Board Member
- d. Member at large from the congregation (nominated by the Christian Education Committee)
- e. Head Pastor (when needed)

#### **Qualities of Members**

1. Each member should believe in the importance of this policy
2. Each member should be able to exercise extreme confidentiality
3. Each member should be able to listen and be thoughtful in reactions to abuse allegations
4. Each member is asked to see each person involved in any allegations as a child of God who deserves love and respect.

#### **Meetings**

1. A minimum of two SCC meetings shall be held annually where documentation is reviewed, policy is discussed and any required training dates are set.
2. If there is an allegation or admission that occurs, at least two members of the committee should meet as necessary to ensure that the correct actions are taken and documentation is correctly stored. These two members will report back to the committee.

### **Term Limits**

By the nature of the positions of those on the committee, employees shall serve during their tenure of employment at Cross Roads Presbyterian Church. Members at large are appointed by the Christian Education Committee, approved by the Session, and shall serve a three-year term. No member at large shall serve for consecutive terms, either full or partial, aggregating more than six years. A member at large having been appointed to the SCC for consecutive terms aggregating six years shall be ineligible to serve thereon for a further term until at least one year has elapsed from the expiration of the last term for which that person was appointed.

### **Safe Church Committee Accountability**

1. The Safe Church Committee is accountable to the session and head pastor of Cross Roads
2. Allegations will be reported directly to the head pastor.
3. If allegations are made against the head pastor, the committee will immediately contact the Stated Clerk's office of Presbytery of Pittsburgh (412-323-1400).
4. There shall be an annual report to session of documents filed, trainings and educational events that occurred, and any pending allegations.
5. If any allegations are made by a member or family member of the Safe Church Committee or are against any member or family member of the Safe Church Committee, that member will recues him/herself from the meetings until all steps have been taken in the process.
6. Any member who has had an admission of guilt in abuse will be asked to leave the committee.

## Forms/Supplements/Appendices

### Online Forms:

**Form 4** Pennsylvania State Police Request for Criminal Records Check Form is available at:  
<https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>

**Form 5** Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance Form is available at:  
<https://www.compass.state.pa.us/CWIS/Public/Home>

**Form 6** FBI Criminal History Clearance Form (Required only if adult has lived in PA for less than 10 consecutive years.) is available at:  
[https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index\\_pde.htm](https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index_pde.htm)