

Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Safety Policy

(This policy is in compliance with the Rio Texas Child, Youth
& Vulnerable Adult Safety Policy adopted June 9, 2018.)

New Fountain UMC
2980 FM 2676
Hondo, TX 78861

Policy Adopted by the New Fountain UMC Governing Council
on May 22, 2022



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CHILD/YOUTH/VULNERABLE ADULT SAFETY POLICY OF NEW FOUNTAIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Adopted by the Governing Council on April XX, 2022mmmm,

God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from sexual and ritual abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong. (From *The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church – 2012*)

New Fountain UMC, Texas, is a spiritual community of faith that endeavors to meet its responsibility to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children and youth who participate in its ministries. In response to the resolution of the General Conference of The United Methodist Church and the directives of the Rio Texas Conference of The United Methodist Church and in covenant with the children and youth who participate in our programs and ministries, the parents and guardians of those children and youth, and all United Methodist Church congregations of like conviction and commitment, we adopt the following Child/Youth/Vulnerable Adult Safety Policy.

Every church worker, whether volunteer or employed staff, plays a part in our collective role of fostering the spiritual development of those who participate in our church-sponsored ministries. All individuals who participate in this church's ministries for children and youth are an expression of our vows to nurture these precious and blessed gifts in the Christian faith. Any policy or procedure affecting these ministries and those who serve to further them must acknowledge the gift of service and respect the integrity of the individuals who demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ for our children and youth.

Therefore, striving to achieve a balance between caution and respect, love and procedure, we pledge to conduct the ministry of the gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of all of our children and youth as well as all of those who work with children and youth. We will follow reasonable safety measures in the recruitment and selection of workers; we will implement prudent operational and supervisory procedures in all programs and events; we will educate all of our workers regarding the use of all appropriate policies and methods; we will require an agreement from all who work in this ministry to acknowledge a code of ethics and participate in a covenant to conform their conduct to the spirit and terms of such code; we will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse that conforms to the requirements of the law; and we will establish respectful and effective procedures to be followed in response to allegations of abuse.

DEFINITIONS:

Church, The Church, Local Church – New Fountain UMC, Texas, a congregation of Christian believers established and governed by the United Methodist Church, the Rio Texas Conference, and the Hill Country District.

1. **Abuse:** is any deliberate act that inflicts bodily or emotional harm to a Participant. Abuse includes: (a) the infliction of physical or emotional injury by other than accidental means; (b) the creation of a risk, or allowing the creation of risk, to a Participant by other than accidental means; (c) committing or allowing to be committed an act of Sexual Abuse, Sexual Exploitation, or prostitution upon the Participant.
2. **Adult Leader:** is any person including any paid employee, volunteer, clergy, or lay person in the local church who has the responsibility for the care and Supervision of a Participant at an event. Adult Leaders shall no longer be in High School.
3. **Applicant:** is any person 18 years of age or older seeking to become an Adult Leader in the local church or for an event.
4. **Assistant Leader:** is any person 16 years of age or older who has been through the application and safety certification process, but does not qualify for a background check. These are still considered to be Participants and cannot fill the role of a mandatory Adult Leader.
5. **Day Ministry Event:** is a local church activity or occasion that involves a gathering and care of Participants during the hours of 7:00 am – 10:00 pm and does not occur for more than four hours per day in duration of four or more consecutive days.
6. **Exploitation:** is obtaining or using another person's income, assets, or possessions with the intent to deprive the person of those resources.
7. **Neglect:** is failure to provide nutrition, medical, surgical, or any other care necessary for the well-being of the Participants.
8. **Overnight/Extended Hour Ministry Event:** a local church activity or occasion that involves a gathering and care of Participants for more than four hours per day in duration of four consecutive days or involves an overnight stay.
9. **Participant:** is a Child, Youth, or Vulnerable Adult that is registered, enrolled, attending, or otherwise participating in an event or activity sponsored by the local church.
 - a. **Child:** is any person 11 years of age or younger.
 - b. **Youth:** is a person 12-17 years of age.
 - c. **Vulnerable Adult:** persons over 18 years of age with physical, mental, and/or developmental disabilities.
10. **Prostitution:** to engage in, to offer to engage, or to force a Participant to engage in sexual contact by either soliciting or receiving a fee or other benefit.
11. **Rule of Three:** The presence of two unrelated Adult Leaders at all ministry events involving Participants. Any engagement with a Participant requires the presence of two Adult Leaders.
12. **Sexual Abuse:** is any sexual contact, sexually explicit language, gestures, or images directed to a Participant.
13. **Sexual Exploitation:** is any deliberate act that allows or encourages a Participant to engage in an act of obscene or pornographic photography, filming, or depiction of a Participant as prohibited under Texas Law.
14. **Supervision:** is the leadership role of a person who is in charge of a group of Participants, giving direction, setting boundaries, disciplining appropriately, maintaining safety and being the leader in all situations.

CHILD/YOUTH/VULNERABLE ADULT SAFETY POLICY

A. SELECTION AND SCREENING

1. Age:
 - a. Those in SUPERVISORY roles or who have PRIMARY responsibility for a group of children or youth will be adults at least 18 years of age and at least five years older than the oldest child or youth for whom they are responsible.
 - b. ASSISTANTS may be younger and have less than a five year age difference, **at the discretion of the adult in charge.** Assistants will never be alone with a group of children or youth.
2. Background Checks:
 - a. Background checks will be required for ALL workers, both paid and volunteer, by completing the Safe Gathering Training and the Trusted Con Confianza Training through the Rio Texas Annual Conference.
One time or emergency volunteers who have not had background checks may be used as assistants only. The adult in charge should get basic information on this person and keep on file.
 - b. Background checks shall be valid for a maximum of 2 years.
3. Code of Ethics/Covenant Agreement:
This agreement will be signed by ALL workers, both paid and volunteer. (Attachment A)
4. Training:
Training concerning all aspects of the policies will be held for all workers (paid and volunteer) at least annually thereafter. Training will be the responsibility of the pastor and/or program staff, aided by volunteers.

B. SUPERVISION:

1. Never Alone:
In order to protect the children, youth and church workers, no worker shall be left alone with a child or youth, out of sight of another adult.
2. Two Adult Rule:
There will be at least two, unrelated (not from the same immediate family) adult workers present at all times during any church-sponsored program, event or ministry involving children or youth.
3. Supervision of Groups/Classes:
There shall be at least two adult workers with each group of children or youth at all times. There are specific guidelines for adults working in the nursery, which are outlined in a separate policy – New Fountain UMC Nursery Policy.
4. Alternatives When Two Workers Are Not Available:
In the event that only one worker is available for a group, the adult in charge of the event or activity will determine the best course of action, which may include combining groups or allowing one adult with a group if there is a “roaming adult” who can check on the group through an open door or window.

5. One to One Activities shall only be allowed under the following circumstances:
 - a. Notification: Prior to any situation where it may be appropriate for a church worker to spend time with a child, youth or vulnerable adult in an unsupervised situation, **verbal permission** from the parent must be obtained **AND** the Program Director or pastor must be notified of the intended meeting.
 - b. Where: Such meetings shall only be done in public places such as restaurants, school events or open areas of the church.
 - c. In exceptional circumstances: a child or youth may meet with an adult for counseling without their parent's permission if in sight of an adult observer.

6. On-Site Worker/Child or Youth Ratios:

ON-SITE worker/child or youth ratios will be determined on a per-event basis and shall not exceed the Minimum Standards set by the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. The applicable age group is determined by the age of the youngest child in a group.

Age Group:

	<u>Maximum # Supervised by Each Worker:</u>	<u>Recommended Maximum Group Size for most events:</u>
0-11 months	4	10
12-17 months	5	13
18-23 months	9	18
2 years	11	22
3 years	15	30
4 years	18	35
5 years	22	35
6-17 years	26	35

7. Off-Site Procedures:

- a. The Driver and Vehicle Use Policy of the church shall be adhered to. (Attachment B)
- b. Travel
 - 1) Only Adult Leaders will be permitted to drive Participants to ministry events. Drivers must be:
 - a) 25 years or older
 - b) Have a valid driver's license
 - c) Proof of insurance at the state's minimum limits
 - d) Not be otherwise disqualified from driving (i.e., under medication, impaired, etc.).
 - 2) Written permission from a parent/legal guardian is required for events requiring transportation to and from the event location.
- c. Two-Adult Rule: At least two adults shall supervise all groups of children and youth on off-site events except as noted below:
 - 1) When transporting children or youth to events in private cars there may be one adult, with at least two children, in the car.
 - 2) The Two-Adult Rule does not apply in parent-child relationships.
 - 3) In emergency situations, an attempt will be made to contact the child's parent or a supervisor before one adult transports a child.

- d. Worker/Child or Youth Ratios:
Whenever possible, off-site activities that involve children and youth will include workers according to the following ratios: (Exceptions will be determined by the adult in charge of the event.)
- | | |
|------------------|-----|
| Ages 0-5 years | 2:4 |
| Ages 6-11 years | 2:6 |
| Ages 12-17 years | 2:8 |
- e. Permission slips, including medical release information, shall be used for all off-site events.
- 1) An annual form may be used to cover all activities for the year, with parents receiving detailed information concerning each activity. (Attachment C)
 - 2) Overnight trips will require an event-specific permission and medical release form.
- f. Overnight Stays:
- 1) Co-ed Overnight Ministry Events require co-ed Adult Leaders.
 - 2) Sleeping accommodations shall include sleeping distance of no less than three feet between Adult Leaders, Assistant Leaders, and Participants.
 - 3) Whenever possible, there will be at least one adult assigned to each room for overnight stays.
 - 4) The adults will be the same sex as the children or youth to whom they are assigned.
 - 5) At no time will there be only one adult and one child or youth sharing a room.
 - 6) Every Participant shall have a completed medical release and parental/legal guardian permission form before they will be permitted to participate at any Overnight Ministry Event.
- g. Phone, video, and online communication:
- 1) Adult Leaders must notify parents/legal guardians before requesting access, friending, texting, contacting a Participant via social media, or using any other form of online phone/video communication
 - 2) Using the Rule of Three, all group or social media communications must include two Adult Leaders who serve as administrators/moderators. All groups must be closed, private, and shall require the site administrator's approval to join.
 - 3) Adult Leaders shall not photograph Participants for use on internet or in print media without written permission of parent/legal guardian.

8. Release of Children and Youth:

- a. From the Church Nursery:
All children must be signed in by a parent or other responsible adult. The sign-in sheet will ask for the child's name and age, time of arrival, parent or guardian's name, where they will be during this event (Sanctuary, Sunday School room, etc.) and any other applicable information (such as allergies, feeding instructions, authorization for someone else to pick up their child, etc.) Children will only be released to an authorized adult.
- b. From Other Activities: (Such as Sunday School, youth activities, etc.)
As a general rule, children (Grades 2 and up) or youth who arrive at the classroom or activity on their own will be allowed to leave on their own at the designated ending time, unless other instructions are given by the parent or guardian.

C. REPORTING PROCEDURES

1. Policy Violations and Inappropriate Behavior

This includes any behavior which is in violation of church policies on Supervision or items 1 through 9 of the Code of Ethics (Attachment A). (Not considered abuse or neglect)

- a. Texas is a mandatory reporting state. All reports of suspected Abuse should be documented in writing and brought immediately to the attention of the persons designated by the church or sponsored event to receive such information. Reports of Abuse shall be made within 48 hours of suspicion. Adult Leaders shall report all abuse by anyone. No Abuse should be considered trivial and not reported. Incidents that involve Abuse, Neglect, Exploitation, or Sexual Exploitation of Participants mandate reporting through the Texas Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400 or www.txabusehotline.org.
- b. Any Adult Leader or Assistant Leader accused of Abuse shall be immediately relieved of duties related to any conference, district, or local church event.
- c. In the case of Abuse allegations, the senior pastor, District Superintendent, and/or Bishop shall be notified immediately. Parents or legal guardians should be notified in appropriate circumstances.
- d. It shall be the goal to provide supportive care to both the victim and the accused and to restore such persons to wholeness. The church should provide a supportive atmosphere to all those who are affected, offering both objectivity and empathy as it seeks to create a climate in which healing can take place. Supportive care can include the procedures of the criminal justice system, provisions of the current Book of Discipline, appropriate counseling referrals, and continued pastoral visitation.

2. Abuse or Neglect

This includes behavior listed in item # 10 of the Code of Ethics, as well as any other behavior considered by the State of Texas to constitute abuse or neglect.

- a. Considerations:
 - 1) All church workers shall be informed of state laws that govern the reporting of child abuse. (Attachment E - Brochure from Texas Attorney General)
 - 2) Church workers shall be informed that discreet and confidential reporting of suspected abuse is critical to abuse prevention. This reporting reflects caring and is not an act of disloyalty. It is a moral and legal obligation, as well as a personal responsibility. It takes precedence over any fear of personal or legal recrimination.
 - 3) ALL allegations must be taken seriously.
- b. Line of Reporting:
 - 1) Any suspected or observed abuse or allegations of abuse by a subject that are brought to the attention of a church worker must be reported immediately to the appropriate persons. These include **two or more** of the following:
 - a) The pastor in charge
 - b) The staff person responsible for that area of ministry
 - c) The Chairperson of the Governing Council
 - 2) The persons making and receiving the report should document all information on the Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse form. (Attachment F)

- 3) The persons receiving the initial report will deliver the report to the pastor in charge as soon as possible, who shall assist with the contacting of the proper authorities.
- 4) In cases of allegations concerning staff or clergy, the report should be given to the Governing Council Chair, and the policies of the Rio Texas Annual Conference shall be followed.
- 5) Individuals who receive anonymous allegations should report as outlined above.

D. **RESPONDING TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE:**

1. Subject: The safety of the subject of alleged abuse must be the church's primary concern..
2. Accused: The accused shall be immediately removed from all children and youth activities until it is determined if further action shall be taken. In any removal of the accused from any activities, care should be taken to handle this in a discreet manner, recognizing that an investigation is still being conducted.
3. Pastor
 - a. The senior pastor shall make a report to Child Protective Services, the annual conference authorities, the church's insurance agent, and the church's attorney. (Child Protective Services must be notified within 48 hours of the incident.)
 - b. The senior pastor shall notify the subject's parent or guardian.
 - c. The senior pastor shall form a Response Team as outlined below.
 - d. The pastor may be asked to offer appropriate counseling.
4. Response Team
 - a. The Response Team shall take any further actions that are required, following the advice of legal counsel and the bishop (or the bishop's designated representative).
 - b. The Response Team shall be made up of the pastor in charge, the chairperson of the Governing Council and at least one other person designated by the pastor, in consultation with the chairperson of the Governing Council.
 - c. The Response Team should document all findings and actions taken in the investigation, cooperate with local and state civil authorities, and determine the eligibility of the church worker to continue in that area of ministry.

E. **CARE OF DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION**

1. Applications and Related Forms:
 - a. All forms filled out by volunteers and employees working for New Fountain United Methodist Church will only be reviewed by the appropriate supervisor. All information will be treated in a confidential manner, and kept in a locked file in the church office. Records will be maintained for seven years.
 - b. Except in the case of a response to a report of suspected abuse, only appropriate leaders, professional staff and the Governing Council shall have access to the information on the application and other related documents.
2. Background Check Results:
 - a. Safe Gatherings will be the agency to notify the pastor and applicant that they have been approved.
 - b. It will be the responsibility of the pastor to follow up with the applicant when a background check raises concerns.

3. Allegations of Abuse:
 - a. In the case of a report of suspected abuse, the Response Team and appropriate legal authorities will have access to any related information.
 - b. Records concerning allegations of abuse will be retained for 20 years.

Code of Ethics/Covenant Agreement

New Fountain United Methodist Church

The congregation of New Fountain UMC is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, volunteers and employees who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church. The following reflects our congregation's commitment to preserving this church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who enter and as a place in which all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others.

1. Church workers will be expected to act and react with Christian love and understanding in all situations, following the Discipline Guidelines (Attachment G) of the church.
2. Church workers will portray a positive role model for youth and children by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy and maturity.
3. Church workers will do everything in their power to avoid being put in a situation where they are alone with a child, youth or vulnerable adult other than their own.
4. Church workers will be expected to treat children and youth of all races, religions and cultures with respect and consideration.
5. Church workers must be free of physical and psychological conditions which might adversely affect the health of children or youth, including, but not limited to, contagious disease.
6. Church workers shall not use or tolerate profanity in the presence of children or youth.
7. Smoking or using tobacco products in the presence or view of children or youth is prohibited.
8. The presence, possession, or being under the influence of any illegal substance while leading, hosting, or participating in a children's or youth function sponsored by the church is prohibited.
9. The consumption of or being under the influence of alcohol while leading, hosting or participating in a children's or youth function sponsored by the church is prohibited.
10. The abuse of children, youth, or vulnerable adults is prohibited, including, but not limited to:
 - Sexual activity, or the display of same, in the presence of or in association with a child or youth.
 - The display of obscene or pornographic materials on the premises of, or at any function of the church.
 - Display or demonstration of sexual activity to, insinuation of sexual activity by, or sexually related conduct directed toward a child or youth.

** (Note: the foregoing provisions are not applicable to activity included in formally sanctioned and congregation approved sex education classes sponsored by or attended as a program of the church.)

Attachment A (continued)

- Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between any person and a child or youth.
 - Physically harmful behavior or bodily injury to a child or youth.
 - Physical neglect of a child or youth, including failure to provide adequate supervision in relation to activities of the church.
 - Mental or emotional injury to a child or youth.
11. Texas state law requires that all citizens report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child or youth to age 18 to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services.
12. Any violation of this code may be grounds for removal as a church worker.

Please answer each of the following questions:

1. As a worker in this congregation, do you agree to observe and abide by all church policies regarding working in ministries with children and youth? Yes/ No
2. As a worker in this congregation, do you agree to participate in training and education events provided by the church related to your volunteer assignment? Yes/ No
3. As a worker in this congregation, do you agree to promptly report any suspected abusive or inappropriate behavior to your supervisor? Yes/ No
4. As a worker in this congregation, do you agree to inform a pastor of this congregation if you have ever been convicted of child abuse? Yes/ No

I have read the church policies regarding working in ministries with children and youth and this Code of Ethics/Participation Covenant, and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth therein.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Print Full Name

Driver and Vehicle Use Policy

Any event organized by New Fountain UMC that requires travel away from the physical church facilities shall require certain planning and consideration by the event organizer and/or sponsors. This policy establishes the responsibilities of both the church and sponsors and of any volunteer drivers, vehicle donors (whether the driver or otherwise), or the drivers of any "vehicles for hire" used for the event.

1. The organizer/sponsor of the event shall select and designate responsible drivers and shall ensure that copies of current driver's licenses and proof of insurance are on file in the church office.
2. All drivers of vehicles for church sponsored events must be at least 25 years of age and possess a current, valid driver's license, have proof of insurance at the State minimum limits, and not otherwise be disqualified from driving (i.e., under medication and the like).
3. Drivers shall have valid licenses and shall keep them in their possession throughout the event.
4. Vehicles must be covered by liability insurance as required by the Texas Motor Vehicle Safety Responsibility Act and such coverage must be maintained throughout the event.
5. Copies of the licenses and proof of coverage described in #3 and #4, above, must remain in the church office throughout the event.
6. Drivers shall be responsible for the safe and proper operation of their vehicles, shall maintain order within said vehicles, and shall not continue operating said vehicles if the drivers or the vehicles become impaired.
7. All drivers and passengers shall wear seat belts when vehicles are in operation and no one age 12 years or younger will ride in the front seat.
8. The event organizer/sponsor shall be consulted if questions arise concerning compliance with this Policy.
9. When conflicting activities cause an event participant from traveling with the group, special arrangements must be made with the event organizer/ sponsor **prior to the date of the event**. In the case of child or youth event participants, the parent or guardian of said participants must provide the event organizer/sponsor with a **written notice of the special arrangements**. Special arrangements include:
 - a. A parent bringing the child or youth late to join the group, or
 - b. Another adult bringing the child.

**All other related policies should be followed, including copy of driver's license and insurance on file in office, no adult (except parent) alone with one child or youth, etc.

CHILD/YOUTH INFORMATION & RELEASE FORM
NEW FOUNTAIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Name: _____ Age: _____ Grade: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Date of Birth: ____/____/____

Church You Attend: _____

Father's Name: _____ Address (if different): _____

Work Phone: _____ Cell/Other Phone: _____

Mother's Name: _____ Address (if different): _____

Work Phone: _____ Cell/Other Phone: _____

Family email address: _____

Name of another responsible adult: _____

Telephone: _____ Relationship to Child: _____

Physician's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Preferred Local Hospital Name & Address: _____

MEDICATION ROUTINELY TAKEN: _____

MEDICATION THAT CANNOT BE TAKEN: _____

Allergies: _____

Special health problems, concerns, dietary needs: _____

Insurance Company: _____ Phone: _____

Name of Insured: _____

Group Number: _____ Policy Number: _____

Date of Last Tetanus Shot: _____

Attachment C (continued)

CHILD/YOUTH INFORMATION & RELEASE FORM
NEW FOUNTAIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

MY CHILD WILL ATTEND: (List Specific Event/ Events requiring Transportation to be checked by parent or guardian.)

AUTHORIZATION FOR PARTICIPATION:

I hereby give my permission for my child, _____, to participate in all child/youth activities sponsored by New Fountain UMC.

I expect that any and all responsible leaders and sponsors will take **REASONABLE PRECAUTION TO ENSURE THE SAFETY** of my child during church-sponsored activities, and I **ABSOLVE** any and all staff, leaders and sponsors and New Fountain, Hondo, TX **OF ANY LIABILITY** for any accident or illness which might occur during the course of such activities.

AUTHORIZATION FOR TRANSPORTATION:

I hereby give my permission for adult leaders and other volunteers to transport my child. I understand that all drivers will be licensed, at least age 25, and that the church will have a current copy of the driver's license and insurance on file. All adults, youth and children will wear seat belts, and no child age 12 or under will ride in the front seat.

AUTHORIZATION FOR PHOTO PUBLICATION:

I give permission for my child's photo to be published in print and/or online.

AUTHORIZATION FOR TREATMENT:

I hereby give my permission for any responsible staff, leaders or sponsors to administer first aid to my child if necessary, or to seek additional medical attention including tests, surgery, etc. as necessary in a medical emergency. I agree to pay all costs and expenses incurred in connection with such medical services rendered to my child. Attempts to contact the parent or guardian will be made as soon as possible following the emergency.

*****I understand that it is MY RESPONSIBILITY TO NOTIFY ALL ADULT LEADERS OF ANY AND ALL CHANGES IN THE INFORMATION PROVIDED concerning my child, and to UPDATE THIS FORM AS NEEDED.**

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

Date

INCIDENT REPORT

(Policy Violations and Inappropriate Behavior)

NEW FOUNTAIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH)

3. Name of individual reporting incident: _____
Position: _____

4. Date and Time of Incident: _____
Place incident occurred: _____

5. Description of Incident (Include specific policies violated, description of behavior, names of persons involved, any other witnesses, etc.): _____

6. Person receiving Report: _____
Position: _____
Action Taken: _____

7. Staff person receiving report: _____
Position: _____ Date of reported: _____
Action taken by staff, if any: _____

Signature of staff person receiving report: _____

INSERT
Attachment E – Brochure from Texas Attorney General Pg 1
HERE

INSERT
Attachment E – Brochure from Texas Attorney General Pg 2
HERE

REPORT OF SUSPECTED INCIDENT OF CHILD ABUSE
NEW FOUNTAIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1. Name and position of worker (paid or volunteer) observing or receiving disclosure of suspected child abuse: _____

8. Subject's name: _____

Subject's age/date of birth: _____

9. Date and place of initial conversation with or report from subject: _____

10. Statement of reporting party. (Clear statement of facts - which provision was violated and how, along with a description of any symptoms and behavior observed in the child or youth (if any): _____

11. Subject's statement (give a detailed summary): _____

12. Name of person accused of abuse: _____

Relationship of accused to subject (paid staff, volunteer, family member, etc. _____

13. Reported to pastor (name): _____

Date and time reported: _____

14. Signatures of: Reporting party: _____

Staff Receiving Report: 1) _____ Position: _____

2) _____ Position: _____

DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

NEW FOUNTAIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

One of our goals in working with children and youth is to help them to develop self-discipline. Discipline comes from the word "disciple". As disciples of Jesus, we live by His example and follow His teaching. In the classroom, the children and youth we teach live by our example and follow our teachings. They are learning a way of living through our example. The ultimate discipline is that which comes from within and which does not depend on an external reward or punishment to ensure acceptable behavior. Our primary goal is to make disciples for Jesus Christ- not to complete a certain number of activities, etc.

In order to achieve this end, the following guidelines are to be used in all situations involving children and youth: (Note: The term "Leader" in this guideline refers to both volunteers and church staff.)

1. CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE OF TRUST AND CARING.
 - a. Appropriate Christian behavior should be modeled by all leaders as they relate to adults, children and youth.
 - b. Treat each student with respect, understanding, and love. Speak to them privately about inappropriate behavior whenever possible.
 - c. Know and use your students' names as often as possible when speaking with them. Be attentive to the changes in the students' lives.
 - d. Leaders should have an understanding of the development, abilities, needs and individual personalities of their particular group, and use this knowledge in planning activities suitable for that group. (Children and youth who are bored or who are required to participate in activities beyond their social, emotional, cognitive, or physical level will naturally use inappropriate behavior to get attention or change the situation.)
 - e. Whenever possible, children and youth should be given choices concerning specific activities which relate to their particular style of learning.
 - f. Appropriate behavior should be recognized and encouraged through words and actions which help them to appreciate themselves and their ability to relate to others in a positive manner. (Not external rewards such as stickers, candy, etc.)

Attachment G (continued)

2. HAVE CLEAR RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR BEHAVIOR WHICH ARE APPROPRIATE FOR THE AGE GROUP INVOLVED.
 - a. Guidelines should be as few as possible and should be stated in a positive manner. (We use our quiet voices inside. We respect the space/property of others. etc.)
 - b. Older children and youth should help to form the specific rules and guidelines for their group.
 - c. Each group's guidelines should be posted in their room.

3. HANDLE INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR IN A POSITIVE MANNER.
 - a. Often, inappropriate behavior is just a means of getting the leader's attention. A gentle hand on the shoulder or eye contact and a nod will let a student know that they are recognized and appreciated.
 - b. Inappropriate behavior should be redirected by stating positive alternatives. ("Blocks are for building. If you want to throw, you may use this ball.")
 - c. Children and youth should be helped to understand why a behavior is inappropriate and what is acceptable in a given situation.
 - d. Children should be held firmly if their behavior will harm themselves or others – this would be an extreme situation.
 - e. "Time Out" should be used only in situations where inappropriate behavior is repeated or when the student is unable to control him\herself. This should be a brief, supervised time away from the group. (Maximum of 1 minute for each year of age.) The goal is not to punish, but to allow time to calm down. The student should be encouraged to verbalize how they might handle the situation the next time.

4. ACTIONS WHICH ARE UNACCEPTABLE IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCES:
 - a. Corporal punishment - shaking or hitting.
 - b. Physical, emotional, or verbal abuse or threats.
 - c. Leaving a child unattended.

If at any time a child or youth needs to be removed from the group or the leader needs assistance or a "time out", the adult coordinator in charge should be contacted.