



***ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH,  
PALO ALTO, CA***

**POLICIES FOR PROTECTION OF  
CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

*Adopted January 2008*

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## **I. Introduction to St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto's Policies for Protection of Children and Youth**

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

Relationships in ministry should, ideally, always be experienced as caring and without intention to do harm or allow harm to occur. The following Code of Conduct has been adopted by St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto to help the church create safe environments for children and youth and for those who minister to them. All Church Personnel (including volunteers who work with children and youth) are asked to carefully consider each statement in the Code and within the Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse before agreeing to adhere to the statements and continue in service to the church.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

*For All Personnel and Volunteers Working with Children and Youth*

- Church Personnel, including Volunteers, agree to do their best to prevent abuse and neglect among children and youth involved in church activities and services.
- Church Personnel, including Volunteers, agree to not physically, sexually or emotionally abuse or neglect a child or youth.
- Church Personnel, including Volunteers, agree to comply with these Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse.
- All Church Personnel, including Volunteers, agree to comply with the Guidelines for Appropriate Behavior with children and youth.
- In the event that Church Personnel, including Volunteers, observe any inappropriate behaviors or possible policy violations with children or youth, Church Personnel, including Volunteers, agree to immediately report their observations.
- All Church Personnel, including Volunteers, acknowledge their obligation and responsibility to protect children and youth and agree to report known or suspected abuse of children or youth to appropriate church leaders and state authorities in accordance with these policies.
- Church Personnel, including Volunteers, understand that the church will not tolerate abuse of children and youth and agree to comply in spirit and in action with this position.

## II. GENERAL DEFINITIONS

A. **CHURCH PERSONNEL** For the purposes of these policies, the following are included in the definition of Church Personnel when they are functioning in their respective roles for the church:

1. **All clergy** whether stipendiary, non-stipendiary, or otherwise who are engaged in ministry or service to the church.
2. **All paid personnel** whether employed in areas of administration or ministry. For example, office staff, sexton, music directors, organists, program directors. This includes any paid personnel whose living quarters are on the grounds of the church.
3. **Volunteers**, including any person who enters into or offers him or herself for a church-related service, or who actually assists with or performs a service. Volunteers include members of advisory boards, vestries, program leaders, and ministry commissions and committees. For example, the Vestry, Youth Group leaders, Acolyte and Book-holder directors, Godly Play teachers, etc.

### B. CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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

### C. REGULARLY OR OCCASIONALLY WORK WITH OR AROUND CHILDREN OR YOUTH

For the purpose of these policies, the following are included in the definition of:

1. Church Personnel **who Regularly Work** with or around children or youth:
  - a. All clergy whether stipendiary, non-stipendiary, or otherwise who are engaged in ministry or service to the church.
  - b. All persons who supervise or assist with supervising children or youth in Godly Play, Youth Group, other ministries, programs or activities more often than occasionally, as listed below.
  - c. All paid or volunteer personnel whose living quarters are on the grounds of the church.

Church Personnel who **Regularly Work** with or around children or youth include, but are not limited to:

- Children and Families Coordinator(s)
  - Youth and Young Adult Coordinator(s)
  - Godly Play Teachers
  - Children's or youth choir directors
  - Bright Lights Leader
  - Organists and Music Directors who work with children or youth
  - Lay youth ministers
  - All Church Personnel, including Volunteers, who work in the nursery if they are the only person over 21 present at any time
  - All staff, whether volunteer or paid, at church camps
2. For the purpose of these policies, the definition of Church Personnel who **Occasionally Work** with or around children or youth are defined as any volunteers who are not otherwise defined as "those who Regularly Work with or around children or youth" or not otherwise defined as "Spontaneous Volunteers" described in C3.
3. **Spontaneous Volunteers**, those who volunteer to help in the moment (ie: helping in the nursery due to a caregiver shortage, offering to help as a Godly Play greeter in a pinch, etc.), though expected to follow the GUIDELINES FOR APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR and to read the CODE OF CONDUCT, are exempt from the screening and selection portion of this policy. The above stated documents will be posted for viewing.

#### D. TYPES OF ABUSE

1. Physical abuse is non-accidental injury, which is intentionally inflicted upon a child or youth.
2. Sexual abuse perpetrated by an adult is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a child or youth and an adult. This includes any activity, which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of the adult, child or youth.
3. Sexual abuse perpetrated by another child or youth is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a child or youth and another child or youth when there is no consent, when consent is not possible, or when one child or youth has power over the other child or youth. This includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of any of the children or youth.
4. Emotional abuse is mental or emotional injury to a child or youth or other behavior that can seriously interfere with a child's positive development
5. Neglect is the failure to appropriately protect a child or youth from harm.

### III. SAFEGUARDS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

#### A. SCREENING AND SELECTION

1. Any and all St. Mark's Church Personnel, including Volunteers, who Regularly Work (see definition, pg 4, C1) with or around children or youth shall be screened and selected using at least the following:
  - a. A STANDARD APPLICATION completed by the applicant that includes an authorization for the release of information to conduct background checks and agreement in writing to the CODE of CONDUCT.
  - b. CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK in any state or country where the applicant has resided in the last seven (7) years.
  - c. SEXUAL OFFENDER REGISTRY CHECK in any state or country where the applicant has resided during the past seven (7) years.
  - d. INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW with the applicant, conducted in person.
  - e. REFERENCE CHECKS conducted in person or on the telephone following the VOLUNTEER VERIFICATION SCRIPT and the VOLUNTEER VERIFICATION FORM and preferably with people outside the parish who know the applicant and have observed the applicant working with children.
  - f. DRIVING OR MOTOR VEHICLES CHECK if the applicant may be transporting children or youth.
2. Any and all St, Mark's Church Personnel, including Volunteers, who Occasionally Work (see definition, pg 5, C2) or around children or youth shall be screened and selected using at least the following:
  - a. A signed acknowledgement of the CODE OF CONDUCT.
  - b. A Signed acknowledgement of the GUIDELINES FOR APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR.
  - c. Individual Interview with the applicant.
3. All information gathered about an applicant will be carefully reviewed and evaluated to determine whether or not the applicant is suitable for working with children.
4. Files pertaining to this policy will be kept for all employees and volunteers, including those who are not hired or approved as volunteers.. Access to these files is restricted to Saint Mark's Rector, Associate Rector, or others whom the Rector or Associate Rector determines should have access to the files.

#### B. EDUCATION AND TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

1. All Church Personnel, including Volunteers, who **Regularly Work** (see definition, pg 4, C1) with children or youth, such as Godly Play teachers, Youth Ministry advisers and Confirmation mentors, are required to attend scheduled training using the visual aid "Safeguarding God's Children", to be briefed on the Church's Code of Conduct, especially the Guidelines for Appropriate Behavior by Church Personnel, including Volunteers, and to sign an acknowledgement of

both documents.

2. All Church Personnel, including Volunteers, who **Occasionally Work** (see definition, pg 5, C2) with or around children or youth must be clearly informed and briefed regarding the Code of Conduct and Guidelines for Appropriate Behavior by Church Personnel, and acknowledge both documents before they start their work with children or youth.
3. Church Personnel, including Volunteers, who are responsible for screening and supervising others in programs for children and youth are required additionally to study the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services publication titled "Preventing Child Sexual Abuse within Youth-serving Organizations". A copy of this publication should be retained as an ongoing reference.

### **C. MONITORING AND SUPERVISION OF PROGRAMS**

1. Every program for children and youth must have established ratio goals for adults and children. At St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto, the established ratio goals are as follows:
  - a. For children's programs the ratio goal is 7 children to 1 adult
  - b. For youth programs the ratio goal is 10 youth to 1 adult
2. During certain congregation sponsored programs and/or activities, for example a trip to Disneyland, there may be the opportunity for youths to spend free time without direct adult supervision. For such free time periods, youths will be assigned "buddy groups" of no less than three youths per group, and youths will be required to remain with his or her buddy group at all times.
3. When one-to-one conversation or pastoral care is advisable between an adult leader and a youth, another adult is to be aware of the place of consultation and who is being counseled. When possible, pastoral meetings should be in public places such as restaurants or a corner away from the action but in full view.
4. Volunteers under the age of 18 should be supervised by a Church Personnel or Volunteer over the age of 21.
5. Each program will develop age-appropriate procedures to ensure the safety of children and youth using restrooms and showers or baths.

### **D. GENERAL CONDUCT FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

The following guidelines are intended to assist Church Personnel, including Volunteers, in monitoring and supervising behaviors and interactions with children and youth to identify and stop those that may be inherently harmful to children or youth, that are the type used by child molesters to groom children, youth and their parents, or that may create the conditions where abuse can occur more easily.

These guidelines should also be used to make decisions about interactions with children and youth in church sponsored and affiliated programs. They are not designed or intended to address interactions within families. When exceptions to these guidelines must be made, they should be reported to the Rector, Associate Rector, Wardens or supervisor of the Church Personnel, including Volunteers, or Volunteer making the exception as soon as possible.

1. All Church Personnel, including Volunteers, who work with children or youth must agree to comply with the St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto Policies for Protection of Children and Youth.
2. Programs for infants and children under six (6) years old will have procedures to ensure that children are released from the premises only to their parents or legal guardians or those designated by them.
3. Church Personnel, including Volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, distribution, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or the misuse of

legal drugs while participating in or assisting with programs or activities specifically for children or youth.

4. Parents or guardians must complete written permission forms before Church Personnel, including Volunteers, transport children and youth for a church sponsored activity.
5. Church Personnel, including Volunteers, will respond to children and youth with respect, consideration and equal treatment, regardless of sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, culture or socio-economic status. Church Personnel, including Volunteers, will portray a positive role model for children and youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, patience, and maturity.
6. Church Personnel, including Volunteers, are prohibited from dating or becoming romantically involved with a child or youth.
7. Church Personnel, including Volunteers, are prohibited from having sexual contact with any children or youth.
8. Church Personnel, including Volunteers, are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing, internet sites and downloads, etc.) on church property or in the presence of children or youth except as expressly permitted as part of a pre-authorized educational program.
9. Church Personnel, including Volunteers, are prohibited from discussing their own sexual activities with children or youth.
10. Church Personnel, including Volunteers, are prohibited from sleeping in the same beds or sleeping bags with children or youth. Church Personnel, including Volunteers, are prohibited from, being alone with individual youth or children in tents, hotel rooms or other rooms with children or youth unless the adult is an immediate family member of all children or youth in the bed, sleeping bag, tent, hotel room or other room. Individual Church Personnel, including Volunteers, may only be alone with multiple children or youth in tents, hotel rooms or other rooms with children with the prior approval of the rector (or canonical equivalent), and/or coordinators of ministries for children and youth. It is acceptable to have multiple adults sleep with all the children or youth participating in one open space such as a church basement or camp lodge.
11. Church Personnel, including Volunteers, are prohibited from dressing, undressing, bathing, or showering in the presence of children or youth.
12. Church Personnel, including Volunteers, are prohibited from using physical punishment in any way for behavior management of children and youth. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force. Physical force may only be used to stop a behavior that may cause immediate harm to the individual or to a child, youth or others.
13. Church Personnel, including Volunteers, are prohibited from using harsh language, degrading punishment, or mechanical restraint such as rope or tape for behavior management.

14. Church Personnel, including Volunteers, are prohibited from participating in or allowing others to conduct any hazing activities relating to children's or youth ministry or camp activities.

## **IV. RESPONDING TO PROBLEMS**

### **A. REPORTING INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS OR POLICY VIOLATIONS WITH CHILDREN OR YOUTH**

1. When Church Personnel, including Volunteers, observe any inappropriate behaviors, behaviors that are inconsistent with the GUIDELINES FOR APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR, or which may violate any provision of these Policies, they must immediately report their observations as described below. Examples of inappropriate behaviors or violations of the Policies include, but are not limited to seeking private time with children or youth, taking children or youth on over-night trips without other adults, swearing or making suggestive comments to children or youth, or selecting or using staff or volunteers without the required screening.
2. Such inappropriate behaviors or possible violations of the Policies that relate to interactions with children or youth should be reported in one of the following ways:
  - a. A telephone call or meeting with the Rector or Associate Rector, if the person suspected of violating the Policies is not the Rector or Associate Rector;
  - b. A telephone call or meeting with a church warden if the person suspected of violating the Policies is the Rector or Associate Rector;
  - c. A telephone call, meeting or fax to the Bishop;
  - d. Submit a NOTICE OF CONCERN (see Appendix), signed or unsigned.
3. All reports of inappropriate behavior or violations of the Policies will be taken seriously and appropriate actions will be taken.

### **B. REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE OF CHILDREN OR YOUTH**

1. All Church Personnel, including Volunteers, are required to report any suspected or known abuse of children or youth directly to the Rector or Associate Rector of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto (as provided above in Section A) so that immediate and proper steps may be taken to ensure the safety of alleged victims.
2. In addition, these Policies require that Clergy must report known or suspected abuse of children or youth to the appropriate state authorities (see page 19) in accordance with applicable California State laws. Failure to report suspected abuse of children or youth may be a crime. Reports may be made confidentially or anonymously. Every state provides immunity from civil liability for persons required to report suspected abuse in good faith and without malice. Simply stated, "in good faith" means that the person submitting the report believes what he or she is reporting to be true.
3. Additionally, Church Volunteers are encouraged, but not required, to report any suspected or known abuse of children or youth that may have been perpetrated by Church Personnel directly to state authorities.

4. Reports of suspected or known abuse that involves Church Personnel, including Volunteers, may be reported to the Diocese of California in the following ways:
  - a. A telephone call, meeting or fax to the Bishop;
  - b. A telephone call or meeting with the rector or associate rector, if the rector or associate rector is not the person being complained about.
  - c. Submit a NOTICE OF CONCERN (see Appendix), signed or unsigned, to the Bishop at 415-673-1510 (Bishop's confidential fax number).
5. The Diocese of California and St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto will cooperate with any investigation by state authorities to the fullest extent appropriate and inform authorities that a concurrent internal investigation will be directed by the Diocese of California.

## APPENDIX

### A. GUIDELINES FOR APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

The Diocese of California and St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto are committed to creating and promoting a positive, nurturing environment for our children's and youth ministries that protect our children and youth from abuse and our Church Personnel, including Volunteers, from misunderstandings. When creating safe boundaries for children and youth, it is important to establish what types of behaviors are appropriate and inappropriate; rather than leaving the decision to each individual. Stating which behaviors are appropriate and inappropriate allows Church Personnel, including Volunteers, to comfortably show appropriate attention in ministry, and yet identify individuals who are not maintaining safe boundaries with children or youth.

These Guidelines are based, in large part, on avoiding behaviors known to be used by child molesters to groom children or youth and their parents for future abuse. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by all Church Personnel, including Volunteers, working around or with children or youth.

1. Love and behavior are part of church life and ministry. There are many ways to interact appropriately while maintaining positive and safe boundaries with children and youth.

***Some POSITIVE and APPROPRIATE forms of behavior are listed below:***

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

## GUIDELINES FOR APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR (Continued)

2. The following behaviors are considered *INAPPROPRIATE* with children and youth in ministry setting because many of them are the behaviors that child molesters use to groom children or youth and their parents for later molestation or can be, in and of themselves, sexual abuse:
- Inappropriate or lengthy embraces
  - Kisses on the mouth
  - Holding children over three years old on the lap, ***without the express consent of the parent(s)***
  - Touching bottoms, chests or genital areas other than for appropriate diapering or toileting of infants and toddlers
  - Physical contact in isolated unobservable or areas such as bedrooms, closets, staff-only areas or other private rooms
  - Occupying a bed with a child or youth
  - Wrestling with children or youth
  - Tickling children or youth
  - Any type of massage given by a child or youth to an adult
  - Any type of massage given by an adult to a child or youth
  - Any form of unwanted affection
  - Comments or compliments (spoken, written, or electronic) that relate to physique or body development. Examples include:
    - "You sure are developing;" or
    - "You look really hot in those jeans"
  - Snapping bras or giving wedgies or similar touch of underwear whether or not it is covered by other clothing
  - Giving gifts or money to individual children or youth without informing parents or supervisor (including program directors, such as confirmation coordinator, etc.)
  - Meals in private with individual children or youth without informing parents or supervisor.
  - Private communications (including but not limited to phone, email, internet) with individual children or youth unless approved by parents or supervisor

## **B. CODE OF CONDUCT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT, RELEASE AND SIGNATURE**

### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

Please read and initial each item to signify your agreement to comply with the statement.

- I agree to do my best to prevent abuse and neglect among children and youth involved in church activities and services.
- I agree not to physically, sexually or emotionally abuse or neglect a child or youth.
- I agree to comply with the policies for GENERAL CONDUCT FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH defined in the Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse.
- I agree to comply with the GUIDELINES FOR APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR with children and youth.
- In the event that I observe any inappropriate behaviors or possible policy violations with children or youth, I agree to immediately report my observations.
- I acknowledge my obligation and responsibility to protect children and youth and agree to report known or suspected abuse of children or youth to appropriate church leaders and state authorities in accordance with the POLICIES FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH FROM ABUSE.
- I understand that the church will not tolerate abuse of children and youth and I agree to comply in spirit and in action with this position.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**CODE OF CONDUCT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT, RELEASE AND SIGNATURE FOR INDIVIDUALS CONSIDERED FOR EMPLOYMENT OR REGULAR VOLUNTEER DUTIES AT ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this application is complete and accurate. I understand that providing false information is grounds for not hiring me or choosing me for a volunteer position or for my discharge if I have already been hired or chosen.

I authorize any person or organization, whether or not identified in this application, to provide any information concerning my previous employment, education, credit history, driving record, criminal conviction record, sexual offender registry or other qualifications for my employment or volunteering. I also authorize St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto to request and receive such information.

If hired or chosen, I agree to be bound by St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto's policies and procedures, including but not limited to its POLICIES FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH FROM ABUSE and CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH. I understand that these may be changed, withdrawn, added to or interpreted at any time at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto's sole discretion and without prior notice to me.

I also understand that my employment or volunteering may be terminated, or any offer or acceptance of employment or volunteering withdrawn, at any time, with or without cause, and with or without prior notice at the option of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto or myself.

Nothing contained in this application or in any pre-employment or prevolunteering communication is intended to or creates a contract between myself and St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto for either employment, volunteering or the providing of any benefit.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE PROVISIONS.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### C. CONFIDENTIAL NOTICE OF CONCERN

Once completed, please place in confidential, sealed envelope for the Rector, Associate Rector, Warden or Bishop or fax to the confidential fax line in the Bishop's Office 415-673-1510

Individual(s) of Concern: \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of occurrence: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of occurrence: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Concern:

Inappropriate behavior with a child or youth

Policy violation with a child or youth

Possible risk of abuse

Other concern: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe the situation: What happened, where it happened, when it happened, who was involved, who was present, who was notified? If reported to the State, what was their recommendation about investigating? *Attach additional sheets if needed.*

Has this situation ever occurred previously? *Attach additional sheets if needed.*

What action was taken? How was the situation handled, who was involved, who was questioned, were police called? *Attach additional sheets if needed.*

Would you like someone to call you to discuss this situation?

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Location/Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_

To be filled out by the Reviewer

What is the follow-up plan? Does anyone else need to be notified? Will the situation need monitoring? *Attach additional sheets if needed.*

## D. SUGGESTIONS FOR TAKING INITIAL REPORTS

The following suggested steps for reporting abuse or suspected abuse. They are taken from the book, "For Their Sake: Recognizing, Reporting and Responding to Child Abuse" by Dr. Becca Cowan Johnson. In the event that there has been an allegation of inappropriate behavior, a violation of these Policies or an abuse of a child or youth as further described in the Policies, the following steps may be taken:

Assure privacy but not confidentiality. A child may say to you that they have something to tell you but only if you promise not to tell anyone else. If you are a legally mandated reporter, you cannot make such a promise. You may tell the child, "Everything we talk about will be private. But, if I think you are going to hurt yourself or someone else, or if someone is hurting you, then I may have to share our conversation with someone else who can help you."

Be calm. If your response to hearing about an abusive situation reflects shock, it may adversely affect the abused child. It is appropriate to share your feelings of concern with the individual, but getting upset about the situation may result in the child feeling worse about it or worse about his/her role in it.

Believe the child or youth. Avoid asking "why" questions that could be construed as accusatory. Many children believe that adults will not believe them, especially if their abuser has reinforced such thinking by saying that no one will believe them because of their age. Therefore, it is important not to discount anything the child tells you that involves an abusive situation.

Get the facts, but don't interrogate. In making a report, it is necessary to have certain factual information. However, you do not have to interview the child to determine whether the abuse occurred or didn't occur. Leave that to the experts. Your responsibility is to present the child's story to the authorities.

Reassure the child. It may have taken quite a bit of courage for the child to finally tell his/her story. Assure the child that what happened was not his or her fault. Use such statements as "I believe you," or "this happens to other kids too", or "it's not your fault this happened." Tell the child that he or she was very brave and mature to tell you about the situation.

## **E. LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL RESOURCES**

### **1. LOCAL**

PALO ALTO POLICE (650) 329-2406

### **2. STATE**

CALIFORNIA AGENCY  
State of California  
Department of Justice  
Record Security Section, C-121  
P. O. Box 903387  
Sacramento, CA 94203-3870  
(916) 227-2928  
WEBSITE [www.caag.state.ca.us](http://www.caag.state.ca.us)

MEGAN'S LAW  
<http://www.meganslaw.ca.gov/>

### **3. FEDERAL**

US DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
*"Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Within Youth-serving Organizations"*  
[www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/PreventingChildSexualAbuse.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/PreventingChildSexualAbuse.pdf)

### **4. RESOURCES FOR BACKGROUND CHECKS**

CHURCH VOLUNTEER CENTRAL  
Shepherd's Watch background checks done by Church Volunteer Central in partnership with LexisNexis.  
[www.churchvolunteercentral.com](http://www.churchvolunteercentral.com)

OXFORD DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT COMPANY  
Comprehensive background checks for clergy, church workers and volunteers.  
[www.oxforddoc.com](http://www.oxforddoc.com)

STERLING BACKGROUND SCREENING  
Provider of background screening for secular and religious organizations.  
[www.sterlingtesting.com](http://www.sterlingtesting.com)

## **F. RESOLUTION X031, HOUSE OF BISHOPS LETTER ON CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE 2003 TOPIC/TITLE: PROCEDURAL: PASTORAL LETTER PROPOSER: KEN PRICE**

A PASTORAL LETTER FROM THE BISHOPS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

To be read or cause to be distributed in every parish, mission, preaching station, and church-related institution which works with children and youth.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We your bishops are steadfastly committed to seeing that the Episcopal Church is a community of safety and health for all people. The Body of Christ, the Church, must be a place where adults, children, and young people find the love and blessing of God, and where no one might be hurt and where their hurts may be healed.

We are all aware of the reports in the media, during the past year and more, of incidents of sexual misconduct in churches. Many of these tragedies have involved children and young people. While the Roman Catholic Church has most often been mentioned in news reports and accusations, the rest of the Church and many secular agencies have also been caught up in trying to address the damage done to our children by sexual predators. The Episcopal Church is not immune to this scourge in our society and we must respond to it honestly and forthrightly.

Our Church has repeatedly upheld our mandate to be a haven of safety for all. The Scriptures teach us that every human being is made in the image of God; and our Lord enjoins us to receive and serve the least among us as we would receive and serve him. The mandates of our baptismal covenant include seeking and serving Christ in all persons, loving our neighbors as ourselves, striving for justice and peace for all people, and respecting the dignity of every human being.

Because of these mandates of love, respect, service, and justice, we have acknowledged our obligation to articulate clear standards about sexual harassment and misconduct, and to ensure that all our work and ministry is guided by them. We have been committed to sexual conduct training and abuse prevention for all our clergy and lay leaders. We have been clear that exploitation and abusiveness are always unacceptable in our common life. We have made efforts to become aware of the spiritual and emotional damage that is done by sexual misconduct, and to do our best to guarantee that none who come to us will suffer such harm. In spite of our best efforts, it is sad when we discover that we have not done enough.

While we were in conference together at Kanuga, North Carolina in the spring, many of us had the opportunity to learn more about pedophilia, a form of predatory sexual behavior that has caused untold harm in our society and in the Body of Christ. It is especially important that we as a church focus on understanding and preventing pedophilia.

While we need to be aware that pedophilia is a reality in our society, which can be manifest in the church, we must be very clear about the nature of this tragic problem. Pedophilia is pervasive; one in eight males and one in four females will be molested before they reach the age of eighteen. Of reported cases in the general population, sixty percent (60%) of abusers are known to their victims, thirty percent (30%) are family members or relatives, and ten percent (10%) are strangers. We must be aware that the Church is a community which offers predators the opportunity to become known and trusted by parents and their children.

We also know that offenders are predominantly male and heterosexual. We must take great care not to equate pedophilia with homosexuality in our minds or our conversation, and we must never assume that only men molest children in this way.

What we have learned most recently about the repetitive nature of pedophilia makes it imperative that we take very clear steps together to do the screening necessary to ensure that our children encounter God's love among us, and that we do all in our power to protect them from the distorted perceptions of love offered by predators.

In a Mind of The House resolution passed at Kanuga in March of 2003, we committed ourselves to support the development of church-wide policies to safeguard our children; and until such time as these policies are adopted, to revisit and revise our diocesan policies to ensure that ministries provided to the children among us will be life-giving and free from abusiveness of any kind.

Among the basic provisions we have committed to implement, delineated in Resolution B008 on the "Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse" adopted at the 74th General Convention in 2003, are:

1. Thorough SCREENING and SELECTION of clergy, lay employees and volunteers who work with children and youth;
2. Articulation of clear behavioral standards for interactions between clergy, lay employees, volunteers and children and youth
3. Careful, CONTINUOUS MONITORING OF ALL PROGRAMS AND INTERACTIONS involving children and youth;
4. Provision for EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF CLERGY, LAY EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS for work with children and youth; and
5. Guidelines for responding to concerns about behavior or allegations of abuse.

In addition we asked the Presiding Bishop to create a working group from among our members to partner with the Church Pension Group, the Church Insurance Corporation and other agencies and appropriate organizations to develop the materials necessary to provide the Church with consistent expectations and standards.

We realize that in many of our congregations, persons who offer to take on ministries with children and youth are a blessing to an understaffed education or formation program for children or youth. The overwhelming majority are trustworthy and caring persons whose ministry will bear great good fruit.

But we must acknowledge that there are times when predators use the church as an opportunity for sexual abuse of children and adolescents who can suffer severe spiritual, emotional, and sometimes physical damage as a result. In response to such times we are called to acknowledge two truths: that human sin and failure are very real, and that God's grace, mercy and power are always strong enough to heal and transform our pain.

We have no intention to call our members to suspicion and mistrust. We do recognize the need to call our members beyond the naiveté of unquestioning confidence and into the care and discipline which must characterize our choices where children are concerned. Jesus called us to be as wise as serpents and as gentle as doves. In the case of pedophilia, our consistency in carefully screening, choosing and training ALL who work with children and youth will serve to allay any concerns about favoritism or carelessness, prohibiting those who have harmed children from ministries involving children, while providing the ability to firmly guide those who might harm children into other areas of ministry which serve the Church and contribute to our mission.

Some helpful materials will be available through your diocesan office by the first of November. We ask that as you make use of them you will remember the challenge our Lord provided to his followers, "unless you become as children you cannot enter the kingdom of God." We renew our commitment to ensure that our church is a community of love and care for every person. We ask that you join us in doing all in our power to see that all our members find among us a safe place where they can be open and trusting and able to know the reconciling love of God in Christ that makes all things new.

#### A COLLECT FOR THE CARE OF CHILDREN

Almighty God, heavenly Father, you have blessed us with the joy and care of children: Give us calm strength and patient wisdom as we bring them up, that we may teach them to love whatever is just and true and good, following the example of our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. (BCP 829)

Bishops of the Episcopal Church  
Gathered at General Convention, Minneapolis, MN  
August 6, 2003, The Feast of the Transfiguration

## **G. RESOLUTION B008, PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH FROM ABUSE, 74TH GENERAL CONVENTION (2003)**

TOPIC/TITLE: CHILDREN: PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH FROM ABUSE PROPOSER: THE RT. REV. THOMAS CLARK ELY (VERMONT)

RESOLVED, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 74th General Convention of the Episcopal Church recommit itself to the vision of the role of children in the church as articulated in A Children's Charter for the Church as adopted by the 72nd General Convention in 1997. The Charter, among other things, calls the church to:

- Receive, nurture and treasure each child as a gift from God;
- Love, shelter, protect and defend children within its own community and in the world, especially those who are abused, neglected or in danger; and
- Advocate for the integrity of childhood and the dignity of all children at every level of our religious, civic and political structures;

and be it further RESOLVED, That this Church acknowledges that the times and circumstances demand that the church articulate a clear and firm commitment to the safety of all, especially children; that we support this commitment with clear and firm policies and procedures for the well being of all; and that we commit this Church to being and becoming a place where children and youth are safe, especially from abuse and neglect; and be it further RESOLVED, That each diocese develop and adopt policies for the protection of children and youth from abuse that address the following:

1. A screening and selection process for all clergy, lay employees and volunteers who regularly work with children or youth. Dioceses are encouraged to consider:
  - a. A written application
  - b. A public records check
  - c. An interview
  - d. Reference checks
  - e. A general provision that volunteers not work with children or youth until they have been known to the clergy or congregation for at least six months
2. The articulation of behavioral standards for clergy, lay employees, and volunteers working with children or youth. Dioceses are encouraged to consider:
  - a. Respect for the privacy and dignity of children and youth by not putting them in inappropriate unmonitored one-to-one situations
  - b. Age-appropriate arrangements for sleeping, bathing, dressing, or showering
  - c. The prohibition of dating, romantic involvements, or sexual contact with a child or youth
  - d. The prohibition of any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing, etc.) in the presence of children and youth except as expressly permitted as part of a pre-authorized educational program
  - e. Guidelines for physical contact and expressions of affection that define appropriate and inappropriate behaviors
  - f. The prohibition of discussing their own sexual activities and fantasies with children or youth
  - g. The prohibition of the non-sacramental use, possession, distribution or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or the misuse of legal drugs

3. The monitoring of programs and interaction with children and youth.  
Dioceses are encouraged to consider:
  - a. The prohibition of the development or initiation of new activities for children or youth without prior approval from the appropriate decision-maker(s)
  - b. The recognition that the ordinary standard is the presence of two unrelated adults for any activities involving children or youth
4. Education and training. Dioceses are encouraged to consider:
  - a. Child abuse prevention for clergy, lay employees and volunteers who regularly work with children or youth
  - b. Specialized training for those who recruit, screen or select persons to work with children or youth
5. Guidelines for responding to concerns. Dioceses are encouraged to consider:
  - a. Inappropriate behavior with children or youth
  - b. Violation of policies for the protection of children or youth
  - c. Suspected abuse of children or youth; and be it further

RESOLVED, That each diocese shall report to the House of Bishops Committee on Pastoral Development prior to the Spring 2006 meeting of the House of Bishops with a copy of its adopted and implemented policy and an evaluation of the history of its use. A summary report shall be made to the House of Bishops Spring 2006 meeting and a full report made to the 75th General Convention.

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The Church Pension Group  
445 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10016  
(800) 223-1800  
[www.cpg.org](http://www.cpg.org)

## H. APPLICATION, REFERENCE, EXPERIENCE AND HISTORY

### St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Palo Alto Volunteer Application

Print or Type – Fill Out Completely

PERSONAL DATA				
LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	MIDDLE NAME	SOCIAL SECURITY #	DRIVER'S LIC. # & STATE
STREET ADDRESS			STATE	ZIP CODE
CITY			HOME TELEPHONE	
			BEST TIME TO CONTACT YOU	BUSINESS OR CELL TELEPHONE
Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense (misdemeanor or felony)? Exclude minor traffic violations. If yes, give details. Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> <i>(A conviction will not necessarily disqualify you from volunteering.)</i>				
Have you ever been accused of physically, sexually or emotionally abusing a child or an adult? If yes, please explain. Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>				
PLEASE LIST YOUR ADDRESSES IN THE PAST 7 YEARS:				
ADDRESS	DATES	LOCATION		
POSITION				
FOR WHICH POSITION(S) ARE YOU APPLYING?				
WHAT INTERESTED YOU ABOUT THE POSITION?				
WHAT HAS PREPARED YOU FOR THE POSITION?				

## REFERENCES

### Volunteer/Civic/Professional References

Please list **at least two (2) volunteer, civic or professional references**. It is preferable that your references be individuals from previous volunteer, elected or employment organizations who can provide information regarding your job-related capabilities.

NAME	RELATIONSHIP	POSITION	COMPANY	BUSINESS ADDRESS/ TELEPHONE NUMBER

### Personal References

Please list two (2) personal references.

NAME	RELATIONSHIP	HOW LONG HAVE YOU KNOWN THIS PERSON?	ADDRESS	DAYTIME PHONE EVENING PHONE

### Family Reference

Please list at least one (1) family reference

NAME	RELATIONSHIP	ADDRESS	DAYTIME PHONE EVENING PHONE

## VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Please include all experience working with children and youth,  
as well as any other relevant volunteer experience.

<b>Organization:</b>	
ADDRESS:	
CONTACT:	PHONE:
DUTIES:	DATES- FROM: TO:

<b>Organization:</b>	
ADDRESS:	
CONTACT:	PHONE:
DUTIES:	DATES- FROM: TO:

<b>Organization:</b>	
ADDRESS:	
CONTACT:	PHONE:
DUTIES:	DATES- FROM: TO:

<b>Organization:</b>	
ADDRESS:	
CONTACT:	PHONE:
DUTIES:	DATES- FROM: TO:

## EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Please list your employment history beginning with your most recent position for the last 10 years.

Previous Employer (Most Recent Position)	Address	From (Mo./Yr.)	To (Mo./Yr.)
Last Position	Starting Position		
Supervisor's Name	Title	Telephone Number	
Brief Description of Present or Last Position			
Reason for Leaving			
Previous Employer	Address	From (Mo./Yr.)	To (Mo./Yr.)
Last Position	Starting Position		
Supervisor's Name	Title	Telephone Number	
Brief Description of Present or Last Position			
Reason for Leaving			
Previous Employer	Address	From (Mo./Yr.)	To (Mo./Yr.)
Last Position	Starting Position		
Supervisor's Name	Title	Telephone Number	
Brief Description of Present or Last Position			
Reason for Leaving			
Previous Employer	Address	From (Mo./Yr.)	To (Mo./Yr.)
Last Position	Starting Position		
Supervisor's Name	Title	Telephone Number	
Brief Description of Present or Last Position			
Reason for Leaving			
Previous Employer	Address	From (Mo./Yr.)	To (Mo./Yr.)
Last Position	Starting Position		
Supervisor's Name	Title	Telephone Number	
Brief Description of Present or Last Position			
Reason for Leaving			

# I. VOLUNTEER REFERENCE VERIFICATION SCRIPT

## Volunteer/Civic/Professional Reference

Hello, this is *[Name, role]* from *St. Mark's Episcopal Church . . .*

Our church has a screening process for all persons who volunteer to work with children, youth or other vulnerable people. In order to comply with our written policy on protecting children, we are required to check references. *Name* has offered to work with *children/youth* as a *[Sunday School teacher/ youth leader/ other]*.

I am calling you because *applicant* indicated in *her/his* application that *s/he* has volunteered/worked with *you/your organization* in the past . . . *[state specific role]*.

1. Can you verify this information?

Would you be willing to answer a few questions about *applicant*? [If willing to answer only one question, ask: Would you invite this person to work with you again?]

2. How long have you known *her/him*?

3. Did *applicant* follow the rules/procedures/policies at *your organization*?

4. Did anyone ever complain about *applicant's* interactions with children or youth?

5. Do you have any reservations about *applicant's* working with children, youth or other vulnerable people?

6. Does the applicant hold any other jobs or do any other volunteer work with children?

7. Is there anything you would care to add?

## Personal Reference

Hello, this is *[Name, role]* from *St. Mark's Episcopal Church*.

Our church has a screening process for all persons who volunteer to work with children, youth or other vulnerable people. In order to comply with our written policy on protecting children, we are required to check references. *Applicant* has offered to work with *children/youth* as a *[Sunday School teacher/ youth leader/ other]*.

I am calling you because *applicant* listed you as a personal reference. Would you be willing to answer a few questions?

1. How long have you known *her/him*?
2. To your knowledge, has anyone ever complained about *applicant's* interactions with children or youth?
3. Do you have any reservations/concerns about *applicant's* working with children, youth or other vulnerable people?
4. Does the applicant hold any other jobs or do any other volunteer work with children?
5. Is there anything you would care to add?

Thank you very much for your help.

## J. VOLUNTEER REFERENCE VERIFICATION FORM

Reference contacted:

Category (professional/personal/family):

Date:

Method of contact:

- phone
- letter/facsimile
- electronic mail
- face-to-face conversation

Note:

---

Reference contacted:

Category (professional/personal/family):

Date:

Method of contact:

- phone
- letter/facsimile
- electronic mail
- face-to-face conversation

Note:

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Reference contacted:

Category (professional/personal/family):

Date:

Method of contact:

- phone
- letter/facsimile
- electronic mail
- face-to-face conversation

Note:

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Reference contacted:  
Category (professional/personal/family):  
Date:

Method of contact:

- phone
- letter/facsimile
- electronic mail
- face-to-face conversation

Note:

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Reference contacted:  
Category (professional/personal/family):  
Date:

Method of contact:

- phone
- letter/facsimile
- electronic mail
- face-to-face conversation

Note:

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**Recommendation:**

**Interviewer's Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_