

**CHILD SAFE POLICIES  
FOR  
LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION**

Eff. 8-4-04

As we create a community where God's love, spiritual growth, caring, and acceptance are regularly experienced with others, we will reach out to children within our congregation and the community at large. Lutheran Church of the Resurrection (LCR) seeks to provide a Christian environment where minors will be safe from physical and sexual abuse and will feel safe, secure and valued.

**I. Volunteer / Staff Selection**

- A. Adults who have been convicted or are guilty of either sexual or physical abuse should not work in any church sponsored activity or program for children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
- B. Adults who have been violated physically or sexually need the love and acceptance of this church. It is our hope that any previously violated adults who are considering working with children, youth or vulnerable adults have therapeutically resolved any issues in their past which might negatively affect their work. If these issues are resolved, we offer our commendation. If they are not, we pray they will accept our help by connecting them with a pastor.
- C. All LCR employees who work with children are presumed to have a commitment to Jesus Christ and the church.
- D. All LCR employees and volunteers who work with children are expected to know and abide by the policies and procedures of LCR.

YOUTH / VOLUNTEER SCREENING FORM (Attachment)

**II. Volunteer/Staff Training**

All staff, Sunday School, middle school/high school youth leaders, Vacation Bible School, confirmation leaders and other ongoing leaders in youth ministries are requested to attend Safe Child Training.

**III. Responding To Allegations or Incidents**

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- A. Mandated Reporters – The law of the State of Georgia requires that certain categories of persons who have reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused shall report or cause reports of that abuse to be made as provided by the law. LCR directs all mandated reporters to comply with the requirements of the law.

- B. Non-mandated Reporters – LCR directs all of its paid personnel and volunteers, whether mandatory reporters or not, to report their knowledge or belief of the abuse of minors when that knowledge is obtained while engaging in the ministries of LCR.
- C. Reporting Alleged Violations – All paid personnel and volunteers of LCR are to report alleged violations of prohibited behaviors to the staff person associated with their ministry. That staff person shall report to the senior pastor. All such reports shall be made in compliance with the law of the State of Georgia.
- D. Reporting Alleged Violations to the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) – The senior pastor or his/her designate shall report all alleged violations to the Southeast Synod office of the ELCA when the alleged violator is a member of the clergy or associate in ministry.

#### **IV. Nursery and Youth Policies**

The following are appropriate behaviors for adults to use in relating to minors when working or volunteering for the church.

##### GENERAL

1. Children should receive love, nurture and protection. Negative remarks about children and their parents shall not be tolerated.
2. All adult supervisors should serve as role models of the adult Christian life as they relate to youth and as they conduct themselves at LCR and in the surrounding communities.
3. Parents should be welcome at all youth activities.
4. Don't ignore problems by looking the other way. Youth will respect and trust your authority and ability to work through problems.
5. Always protect a youth who may be a victim.

##### DISCIPLINE

6. Discipline action may never take the form of physical or psychological punishment.
7. A threatening manner or voice is never to be used with a youth.
8. The only two acceptable forms of discipline action you should consider are talking things over with the youth and declaring a brief "time-out" from activities being conducted at the moment. If difficult behavior persists, then bringing the matter to the attention of the staff members is appropriate in order to consider what additional behavior modification might be pursued. The final resort will be calling the youth's parents.
9. If you lose your patience with a youth, you are to take a "time-out" by placing the youth in the care of another supervising adult. Always think about safety first.

## PERSONAL SAFETY

10. Develop an appropriate emergency plan for all youth outings. This plan should include identifying who is responsible for coordinating an emergency response, accessible emergency phone numbers, health history and permission-to-treat forms, and first aid kits.
11. Children should never be dropped off at a ministry activity unless there is a leader present. Parents should stay with their children until a leader arrives.
12. For elementary school children or younger, a single child or group of children shall not be left unattended in any room at the Church or ministry.

## SAFE BOUNDARIES

15. All youth activities must have at least two adults (21 years old or older) present. For events such as Sunday School, the second adult (such as the Sunday School coordinator) can be checking classrooms on a periodic basis.
16. One-to-one counseling with a youth should always occur in a public place - never alone behind a closed door, in a car or in a private place.
17. Except in the event of an emergency, avoid being alone with a youth in an automobile. If it is necessary to ride or drive alone with a youth, special care is to be taken: (a) don't sit close to one another in the car; (b) no physical contact; (c) do not stop the car to talk; (d) if you must stop, turn on the inside light of the car; (e) be aware of the time when you depart and arrive and mark those times in your diary or record.
18. Any verbal or nonverbal sexual behavior with any student is inappropriate.
19. Dating or going out with any high school student is forbidden.
20. Discretion must be used in dealing with all students, especially regarding physical contact. Innocent behavior can be misinterpreted. A hug around the shoulders is not sexual abuse, but a full body-to-body hug, stroking, massaging, or an affectionate kiss raises questions and should be avoided. Any overt display of affection should be made only in a public setting in front of other group members.
21. Sexual gestures or overtures to a staff member by a student should be reported so that discussion can be held with the student.
22. Sexual harassment, either active or passive, verbal or nonverbal, is inappropriate among youth leaders, workers, and youth group members.
23. Be alert to signs of physical or sexual abuse. Evidence of abuse should be immediately reported.

## PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR

The following behaviors, particularly those defined by the Law of the State of Georgia, are prohibited for all LCR paid employees and volunteers.

- A. Corporal Punishment, which is use of physical force to discipline a child.

- B. Physical Abuse, which is any physical injury inflicted by an adult on a child by other than accidental means.
- C. Sexual Abuse, which is a person's employing, using persuading, inducing, enticing or coercing any minor to engage in any sexual act as defined by the Law of the State of Georgia.
- D. Sexual Exploitation, which is conduct by a child's parents or caretaker that allows, permits, encourages or requires that child to engage in prostitution or child pornography.
- E. Inappropriate Touching or Fondling of a Sexual Nature by any adult of a minor.

The views expressed in this policy are those of Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Marietta, GA alone, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the ELCA, any synod of the ELCA or any other congregation. It is provided with the understanding that it does not constitute legal advice. An attorney should be consulted when developing a similar policy.