

Child and Youth Protection Policy Training

Greenwich Presbyterian Church



**ESTABLISHING & MAINTAINING
HEALTHY BOUNDARIES**

Agenda

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- Values & expectations of our church family
- The church's vulnerability to abuse
- The profile of the perpetrator
- Greenwich's Children & Youth Protection Policy
- Supervision & Definitions
- Screening Process & FAQ's
- Discipline
- Types of Abuse
- Reporting

Values & Expectations



Ephesians 4:7,11-16

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But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it... It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Values & Expectations of our church family

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- Genuine Love & Care
- Healthy Boundaries
- Volunteers set an example
- Cooperation
- Transparency

The Church's Vulnerability



Reflection Question

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**Why are churches
vulnerable to child
sexual abuse?**

Why is the Church Vulnerable?

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- Community of trust
- Ignorance of facts
- Lack of safeguards
- Easy access to victims
- Large number of opportunities
- Children & Youth programs are volunteer-intensive

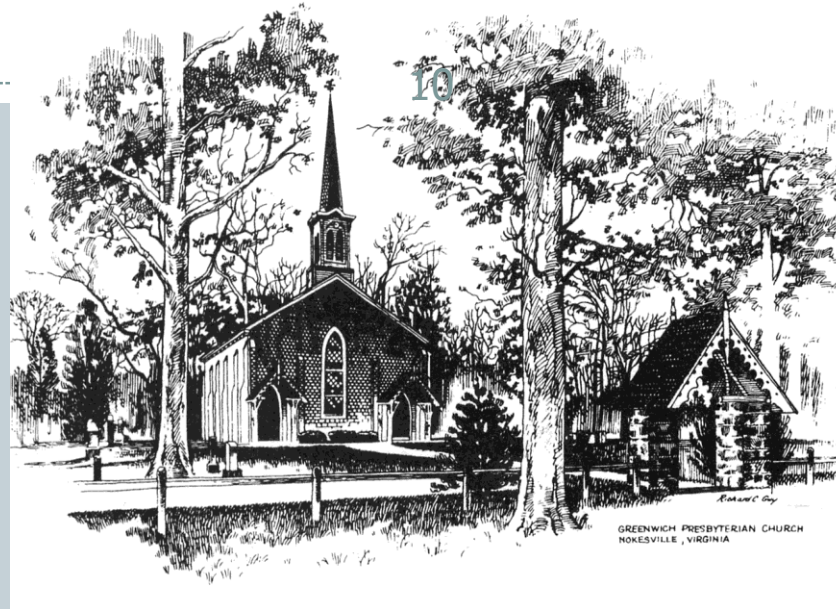
Opportunity

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Child molestation is a serious problem. Molesters want to put themselves in pivotal positions where they can access children.

Dr. Gene Able

The profile of the perpetrator



Reflection Question

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Describe the typical person who abuses children and youth?

Myths of Child Sexual Abuse

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- Most perpetrators are strangers
 - *85% of victims know the abuser*
- Only suspicious men in raincoats sexually abuse children
 - *75% of the male offenders are married or have consenting sexual relationships*
- Only girls are molested
 - *Both boys and girls are sexually abused*
- Children provoke abuse by their seductive behavior
 - *Responsibility lies with the offender totally*
- The majority of children tell someone about the abuse.
 - *66% do not tell because they do not think they will be believed*

Who is the Abuser?

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- Usually known by the victim
- Could be same gender or opposite gender of victim
- Can be male or female
 - Men are the offender 94% of the time
- Can be young or old
- Various social and religious backgrounds
- 60% of abusers were molested as children
- Two general categories of abusers
 - Situational
 - Preferential

Situational Molesters

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- Most offenders are situational
- Few victims
- More likely to confess
- Often molest own children or relatives
- Can be abusive with children or adults in other ways
- Pornography

The Preferential Molester

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- Male, not married, and over 25
- Fewer in number than situational
- Can molest dozens of children over a lifetime
- Frequently moves
- Have age and gender preferences
- Lives alone or with parents
- Excessive interest in children - prefer children
- Photography and pornography

Warning Sign

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**Parents should be aware of
anyone who wants to be
with their children more
than they do!**

Kenneth Lanning

Greenwich's Children & Youth Protection Policy



Policy Statement

- **It is the policy of Greenwich Presbyterian Church that:**
 - All who arrive on our campus or participate in our programs, particularly our children and youth (C&Y), shall be treated in a loving and caring manner, as our Lord would desire.
 - All who arrive on our campus or participate in our programs shall respect healthy boundaries in their interactions, particularly with C&Y.
 - GPC shall comply with the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia regarding C&Y entrusted to its care and reporting instances of abuse.
 - Prior to working with our C&Y, those entrusted with their care of shall be vetted and approved for their roles in accordance with the procedures established in this document.
 - The staff, volunteers, associates, and others involved with, as well as our C&Y participating in, GPC's C&Y activities shall conduct themselves in accordance with the Healthy Boundaries Expectations listed in this document.
 - Reasonable precautions shall be taken to ensure staff, volunteers, associates, and others involved with C&Y programs are not put in a position where unwarranted or false charges are made against them.

Scope of the Policy

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- This policy is applicable to all ministries for those 18 years old and younger. The following examples are illustrative:
 - Nursery
 - Sunday School classes
 - Junior Church
 - Children's Ministry events: VBS, Egg Hunt, Christmas Pageant, etc.
 - Preschool
 - Youth Groups
 - Mission Projects
 - Mentoring Relationships

Healthy Boundaries Expectations

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- All who participate in GPC sponsored C&Y programs or activities shall:

- Ensure that one-on-one interactions between an adult and C/Y are observed and known to another adult (parent or leader/teacher, etc.).

This is a **foundational boundary** for our ministry...

- * *You may not be alone (no one else in sight) with a child other than your own while participating in programs at Greenwich.*
- * *This expectation includes classrooms, restrooms, playground, traveling to and from off-site events, texting & social media interactions.*
- * *We simply are never unobserved with a child or youth.*

Healthy Boundaries Expectations

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- All who participate in GPC sponsored C&Y programs or activities shall:
 - Ensure that one-on-one interactions between an adult and C/Y are observed and known to another adult (parent or leader/teacher, etc.).
 - Utilize common expressions of affection (hugs), affirmation (pats on the back), support (prayers), or physical caretaking (changing diapers, toileting, first aid, etc.) as appropriate in this community of caring Christians. Care must be taken that expressions of affection are not excessive or imposed upon another individual when unwanted.
 - Make healthy choices concerning common vices prevalent in our society which are incongruent with Christian character and obedience; (i.e., shall not display, have possession of, or use obscene/pornographic material or illegal/un-prescribed drugs; shall never be under the influence of, or impaired by any substance while participating in GPC C&Y programs).

Healthy Boundaries Expectations

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- All who participate in GPC sponsored C&Y programs or activities shall:
 - Use clean and caring language while engaged in program activities; (i.e., not use profanity, other inappropriate language, or inappropriate jokes in the presence of C&Y).
 - Maintain a healthy element of privacy concerning an individual's (primarily adult's) personal life; (i.e., not sharing inappropriate personal details or asking another to share inappropriate details of his/her personal life through any form of communication including verbal, written, or electronic).
 - Keep private any confidential information about anyone, or their family, participating in GPC C&Y programs unless the information leads to reasonable suspicion that a Boundary Crossing Event or Incident of Abuse has taken place, an individual may harm him/herself or others, or if compelled by law.
 - Participate in the appropriate training prescribed by this policy.

Supervision & Definitions

- **Volunteer:** A term used for those who work with C/Y at GPC but are not members of the staff, have completed the vetting and training process, and are authorized to work without supervision of another volunteer or an employee. Volunteers are ordinarily members of GPC; exceptions may be made at the discretion of the C&Y Program Director.
- **In order for a program to take place, at least 2 adults, 1 of whom is a screened & trained adult volunteer or employee is required.**
 - This is our **foundational boundary** for supervision of activities.
 - *Trained & screened Volunteers are authorized to be with a group of children unsupervised in a classroom or event space **as long as there are at least two adults present for the program.***
 - As noted earlier, no adult or youth can ever be alone and unobserved with only one unrelated C/Y.

Supervision & Definitions (continued)

- **Associate:** A term used for those who work with C&Y but are not in charge of an activity and must work under the supervision of a volunteer or an employee. Associates are ordinarily members of GPC.
- Associates must be supervised by an Employee or Volunteer at all times when working with our children.
 - ✦ Any adult participating in a program who has not completed our Child & Youth Protection Screening & Training
 - ✦ Parents of children in a program who are not Volunteers
 - ✦ **Youth who are volunteering as leaders or helpers**
 - ✦ Volunteers who have not completed annual training and renewed their commitment to the covenant.

Screening Process

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- There are four mandatory elements and one optional element of the GPC Children & Youth Protection Screening Process that applicants must complete before they may become a GPC volunteer.
 - **The applicant interviews** with a Pastor or Child & Youth Program Director, depending on the particular type of work or position in which he/she is interested.
 - The applicant **must attend** GPC's Children and Youth protection *initial training*.

Screening Process (continued)

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- The applicant must complete a **GPC Children/Youth Work Application** and **sign the Child Protection Covenant**; the Covenant must be renewed annually.
- The applicant must complete an application for and undergo a **confidential background check** (Sex Offender Registry, Criminal Record).
- In addition to the four mandatory elements listed above, if an applicant may volunteer as a driver for Children or Youth events he/she must also provide a copy of his/her Driver's License and proof of insurance and undergo a Driving Record Background Check prior to being allowed to drive GPC Children or Youth to events.

Documents

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Please Return:

1. Signed Covenant
2. Application
 - Include your middle name
 - References who have seen you with children preferred
 - No family members as references
 - At least 1 non-Greenwich reference
 - Copy of drivers license for parents and youth leaders

Take Home:

- Child & Youth Protection Policy

Frequently Asked Questions

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- **Who has access to confidential personal information?**
 - The Children & Youth Program Director, Pastors, & Director of Communications are the only persons authorized to view all completed GPC Children/Youth Work Applications, background check applications, and returned background information.
- **How is confidential personal information stored?**
 - All GPC Children/Youth Work Applications, background check applications and returned background information are stored in a separate secure filing cabinet or safe.
- **How long is confidential personal information stored?**
 - The information described above will only be stored for the three year period the “Security Clearance” is in place.

FAQs (continued)

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- What happens if a background check reveals some type of derogatory information about an applicant?
 - The staff will review the information and determine if the information falls into one of the following categories:
 - ✦ Violent crimes
 - ✦ Sexual offenses
 - ✦ DUI, Reckless driving
 - ✦ Repeat offenses
 - If so, the Pastor or Associate Pastor will meet with the applicant to discuss the information and decide if the applicant is suitable for work with GPC children.
- How often do GPC Volunteers need training on our Children / Youth Protection Policy?
 - Annual Healthy Boundaries Training is required to maintain the GPC Volunteer status.

Discipline



Discipline

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All C&Y participants (except infants & toddlers) are expected to conduct themselves with respect toward other people, readiness to participate in the program they are attending, and willingness to obey and cooperate with their leaders. Here are some key things to remember:

- Parents are primarily responsible for shaping their children's behavior and discipline.
- When managing misbehavior all staff and volunteers will demonstrate love and grace in the way we communicate without using harsh language or tone. We show respect to every child who participates in our programs.

Discipline

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- **Staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of children.** This restriction includes, but is not limited to, spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, grabbing, or any other physical force as a form of correction or punishment for inappropriate behavior. On the rare occasion that a child attempts to cause physical harm to other children, adults, or themselves, they may be physically restrained as gently as possible and removed to the care of the C&Y Program Director or his/her parents.

Discipline

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How do we handle behavior?

1. Clearly communicate expectations and consequences for misbehavior.
2. When a child misbehaves, the following general disciplinary steps should be taken:
 - **Remind** the children of behavior expectations.
 - **Redirect** the children to positive activities.
 - **Remove** a misbehaving child from the activity temporarily.
 - **Return** the child to the group for another chance to behave well.
3. If a child cannot manage his/her behavior after attempting these steps, your supervisor should step in.

Types of Abuse



Sexual Abuse

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Sexual Abuse – Any sexual contact or sexual interaction between C&Y and an adult or older youth for the purpose of sexual stimulation. This includes and is not limited to risqué jokes, innuendo, unacceptable visual contact, unwelcome casual touching, unwelcome and inappropriate touching such as hugs or kisses, any suggestive images, or any other way of affecting sexual stimulation. This behavior is always considered forced, even if a C&Y, out of ignorance, innocence, or fear does not resist; C&Y are incapable of providing consent.

Possible indicators of sexual abuse:

- Self-destructive or destructive behavior, such as alcohol or drug abuse, running away, eating disorders or promiscuous behavior.
- Fear of a particular person
- Extreme behavior: depression, withdrawal from peer relationships.

Neglect

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Neglect – Reckless disregard for the safety of others such as denial of food, water, cleanliness, clothing and sleep.

Possible indicators of neglect:

- Constant hunger or fatigue, inappropriate dress, or poor hygiene.
- Lack of supervision over long periods of time.
- Unattended physical or dental problems.
- Self-destructive and destructive behavior, such as alcohol or drug use.

Physical Abuse

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Physical Abuse – Any instance in which an adult or older youth, in a position of care or authority over C&Y, creates or inflicts, or allows to be created or inflicted, upon a C&Y a physical injury by other than accidental means, or creates a substantial risk of death, disfigurement, or impairment of bodily functions.

Possible indicators of physical abuse:

- Unexplained fractures, burns, bruises, cuts, welts, bite marks
- Explanation for an injury that is inconsistent with the injury
- Self-destructive or destructive behavior
- Extreme behavior: fear, aggressiveness, or withdrawal

Mental, Emotional & Spiritual Abuse

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Mental & Emotional Abuse – Any instance in which an adult or older youth, in a position of care or authority over C&Y, creates mental injury or *threatens* to create mental or physical injury. Any derogatory, spiteful, belittling, hateful or potentially violent words and or actions directed towards C&Y.

Spiritual: Use of religious references to coerce a child or youth into an unhealthy behavior.

Reporting



Reporting

- ***Incident of Abuse:*** Reasonable suspicion of an Incident of Abuse shall be reported immediately to the Pastor (Head of Staff), Clerk of the Session, or Elder on the Incident Response Team (IRT). The report may initially be made orally or in writing. If the report was initially made orally the Incident Response Team shall follow up with the reporter to obtain a formal written report.
- ***Boundary Crossing Events:*** Interactions that do not rise to the definition of abuse but are **intentional or not accidental** and appear to be outside of GPC's Healthy Boundaries. The interaction could be between an adult and child or between two children/youth. Reasonable suspicion of a Boundary Crossing Event shall be reported as soon as possible to the GPC activity leader (Sunday School teacher, youth leader, staff member, etc.) responsible for the activity or event. The report may be made orally or in writing.

Reporting

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- A Boundary Crossing Event does not include situations in which a staff member or volunteer **accidentally** finds her/himself in an unobserved one-on-one interaction that was not intentional (a child arrives early for a program, enters a restroom while occupied by the leader, etc.). In such instances the staff member or volunteer shall immediately return the situation to healthy boundaries and self-report the occurrence to the Activity Leader. Accidental one-on-one interactions between adults and C/Y are not considered Boundary Crossing Events.

Responding to an allegation

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- Confidentiality, confidentiality, confidentiality!
- Honor the allegation
- Respond quickly
- Inform member of response team: Pastor, Response Team Elder
- Mandatory reporting within the commonwealth of Virginia – response to an allegation should be made within 24 hours
- Confidentiality- protects the victim, protects you, the church, the process
- You are not responsible for reporting to the authorities – just to our GPC response team.
- For more information – Response Procedures

Values & Expectations of our church family

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- Genuine Love & Care
- Healthy Boundaries
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