



As a part of our commitment to safety and creating an edifying environment for all participants, the Northern Kentucky Youth Group is guided by the child protection policy for our host church, Lakeside Presbyterian Church. Below are the child protection policies agreed to by all volunteers and staff.



Child Protection Policy
Lakeside Presbyterian Church
Adopted July 31, 2013

GENERAL PURPOSE STATEMENT

Lakeside Presbyterian Church seeks to provide a safe and secure environment for the children and youth who participate in our programs and activities. By implementing the practices below, Lakeside Presbyterian Church affirms our goal to protect the children and youth of our church from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior while also protecting our staff and volunteers from false accusations.

PRACTICES

1. All adults and youth, both employed and volunteer, who work with minors must be screened and adults must undergo a criminal background check prior to beginning work. The steps and the checklist to be used in this Screening Process are labeled "Appendix A".
2. Adults who have been convicted of either sexual or physical abuse of children/youth or those who have a history of inappropriate conduct with children will not be employed and shall not volunteer service in any church-sponsored activity or program for minors.
3. Adult survivors of childhood sexual or physical abuse need and will receive the love and acceptance of our church family.
4. Employees and volunteers who work with children and youth shall observe the "two adult rule" or the "open door policy" at ALL times. The "two adult rule" will be mandatory for all employees and volunteers with our nursery and kindergarten age children.
 - a. The "two adult rule"
It is our goal to have a minimum of two unrelated adult workers in attendance at all times when children or youth are being supervised during our programs and activities. Some youth classes may have only one adult teacher in attendance during the class session; in these instances, doors to the classroom should remain open and there should be no fewer than three students with the adult teacher. We do not allow minors to be alone with one adult on our premises or in any sponsored activity unless in a counseling situation or with special authorization by parents.
 - b. The "open door policy"
Classroom doors should remain open unless there is a window in the door or a window beside it. Doors should never be locked while persons are inside the room.
5. All volunteers working with children and youth are required to be members or active constituents of Lakeside Presbyterian Church for a minimum of six months before they begin their work.

6. Our guidelines and procedures for reporting suspected incidents of abuse, or any behavior, which seems abusive or inappropriate are labeled “Appendix B”. Our guidelines and procedures for responding to reported incidents of abuse are labeled “Appendix C”.





Appendix B

Lakeside Presbyterian Church Child Protection Policy

Reporting Procedures

The law requires a person to immediately report suspected and reported child abuse to the authorities and, in organizations such as Lakeside Presbyterian Church, to the appropriate individual in charge. A person who fails to do so can be prosecuted for a Class B misdemeanor or, in extreme circumstances, may be subject to civil liability for money damages. Therefore, all employees and volunteers at Lakeside Presbyterian Church must adhere to the following procedures:

1. In the event of suspected, reported or discovered child abuse or violation of the Child Protection Guidelines of Lakeside Presbyterian Church, the employee or volunteer shall immediately notify a pastor or, in the absence of a pastor, a person designated by the session of Lakeside Presbyterian Church. In the event of suspected, reported, or discovered child abuse or neglect, the same employee or volunteer will also immediately make a report to the protection and permanency office for Kenton County, 859-292-6550, or the Child Protection Hot Line: 1-877-KYSAFE1 or 1-877-597-2331.
 - Physical signs of molestation may include:
 - Lacerations and bruises
 - irritation, pain or injury to the genital area
 - difficulty with urination
 - discomfort when sitting
 - torn or bloody underclothing
 - venereal disease
 - Behavioral signs of molestation may include:
 - nightmares
 - anxiety when approaching the church building or nursery or preschool area (beyond normal separation anxiety)
 - nervous or hostile behavior toward adults
 - sexual self-consciousness or acting out of sexual behavior
 - withdrawal from church activities and friends
 - Verbal signs of molestation may include:

- "I don't like _____."
- "_____ does things to me when we're alone."
- "I don't like to be alone with _____."
- "_____ fooled around with me."

- Adopted from Child Abuse: Governing Law and Legislation by I. Sloan (1983)
2. Reports shall be documented in writing with the date of the report, the time of the report, the telephone number to which the report was made, the name of the recipient of the report, and a brief synopsis of the report. If at all possible, all oral reporting will be done in the presence of a recorded witness.
 3. All church employees and volunteers working with minor children will receive training each year regarding the signs of child abuse, including child sexual abuse, and the steps to report any and all suspected child abuse.



Appendix C

Lakeside Presbyterian Church Child Protection Policy

Response Procedures

1. The official spokesperson for Lakeside Presbyterian Church shall be the Senior Pastor, or in the absence of the Senior Pastor, a person previously designated by the session. All inquiries or requests for information from the media, attorneys or any other parties shall be referred to the official spokesperson. No person other than the official spokesperson is to release any information regarding any alleged incident of child abuse without the express approval of the official spokesperson.
2. The official spokesperson shall immediately report any alleged incident of child abuse to the appropriate local Child Protection Services agency of the county, our insurance carrier, and the General Presbyter of the Presbytery of Cincinnati.
3. The care and safety of the victim is our first priority. We will not confront the accused without the approval of the Child Protection Service or law enforcement authorities.
4. We will not prejudge any person accused, but we will take any allegation of child abuse seriously and will reach out in Christian love and support to the victim and the victim's family, extending whatever pastoral care resources are needed. We will fully cooperate with any authorities investigating an allegation of child abuse.
5. We will treat the accused with dignity and respect. If the accused is a church worker, that person shall be temporarily relieved of his or her duties until the investigation is finished and the person cleared by the authorities. If the accused is a paid employee of our church, his or her income will be maintained, until allegations are cleared by authorities or until criminal charges are filed.
6. All communication by the official spokesperson to the media, congregation, and public will protect the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.
7. All efforts in responding to the alleged incident of child abuse shall be documented by the Senior Pastor or, in the absence of the Senior Pastor, by the previously designated spokesperson, and maintained in a secure and confidential file.



Lakeside Presbyterian Church Child Protection Policy

Bullying Policy

Lakeside Presbyterian Church seeks to create an environment that is positive and encouraging for all participants. Accordingly, we have no tolerance for bullying. Any instance of bullying will be met with immediate action on the part of Lakeside staff and volunteers. Any participant who attends any of the activities hosted by Lakeside will be held accountable to the standards of behavior and consequences explained below. Participation is therefore viewed by Lakeside Presbyterian Church as an acknowledgement on behalf of the participant to abide by the standards listed below.

Definition:

Bullying is simply any and all acts intentionally directed at an individual or group of individuals that would reasonably be expected to cause emotional or physical harm. Recognize that bullying can come in many forms. Any act which fits the aforementioned description will be considered bullying whether in the form of a direct verbal encounter, an indirect verbal encounter (i.e. spreading gossip through others), online messaging, online postings, text messaging, or phone messaging.

Procedure and Consequences:

Volunteers and staff will use situational judgment while abiding by the procedures listed below. All volunteers and staff have agreed to follow the procedures listed below. If a child or youth is found to have taken part in bullying the following procedure will be followed by staff and volunteers:

1. The child or youth will be immediately sent home from the activity. If the church group is on a trip, the volunteer or staff will use discretion as to whether or not the offender(s) will be sent home or simply separated from the group. If the staff or volunteer determine that the offense is severe enough to warrant a participant being sent home from a trip, it will be the responsibility of the parents to facilitate travel home.
2. The parents of the offender will be immediately notified.
3. The volunteer or staff person in charge at the time of the offense will make a full report to the pastoral staff.
4. Depending on the severity of the incident the following consequences will result:
 - Determine if a permanent suspension is necessary.
 - If it is a first time offense:
The offender will be suspended from activities for one week. The offender must be 1. willing to make proper amends to the victim. The offender must 2. display an attitude of sincere regret before being allowed to return to the program. The offender will 3. meet with a volunteer or staff to discuss the behavior. If all of these consequences are met the offender will be allowed to return at the end of his/her suspension.
 - If it is not a first time offense:
The pastoral staff will set an appointment to meet with the offender and his/her parents. It is possible that the offender will no longer be welcome to participate in church events.

For more information visit www.pta.org/bullying.

UNDERSTANDING BULLYING

By Tara L. Kuther

<http://www.aets.org/article175.htm>

Each day hundreds of thousands of children dread going to school and facing the taunts, jeers, and humiliation wrought by bullies. When we think of bullying, the easily identifiable physical and verbal harassment comes to mind, including teasing, taunting, threatening, and hitting. Relational bullying is more difficult for adults to observe and identify. Children who bully through relational means socially isolate their victims by intentionally excluding them or spreading rumors about them. Bullying, then, refers to physical or psychological intimidation that occurs repeatedly, is intended to inflict injury or discomfort on the victim, and creates an ongoing pattern of harassment and abuse.

The bullying relationship is characterized by an imbalance of power, such that the victim of bullying finds it hard to defend him- or herself and begins to feel powerless against the bully. The child who bullies typically is bigger, older, stronger, or more popular than the victim of bullying, and his or her intent is to exert power over the victim. For example, girls who bully through exclusion and other forms of relational aggression tend to have more social power than their victims. The bully is aware that his or her behavior causes distress, the bully enjoys the victim's reaction, and the bullying continues and escalates. Bullies hurt others in order to feel strong and powerful at a given moment.

It's very difficult for most parents to determine whether their children engage in bullying behaviors because most bullying occurs out of parents' sight.

Some adults and children rationalize bullying because victims are overly sensitive, cry easily, or act in ways that set them apart from other children. Even if the victim does show these characteristics, adults and children must know bullying is not a healthy coping response—it signals that a child needs to learn how to manage his or her emotions, release anger and frustration in more healthy ways, and learn more constructive strategies for getting along with others. Your role, as parent or teacher, is to help children establish more mature and healthy ways of relating with others, thereby ensuring that they will grow into caring and adaptive adults.

Who is likely to be victimized?

There are at least two types of victims: passive victims and reactive victims. The stereotypical image of the bullied child is the passive victim: He or she avoids confrontation, is physically slight, quiet, does not tease others, and does not defend him- or herself from the bully. The passive victim turns inward when bullied—crying and withdrawing rather than fighting back.

Reactive victims are much less common than passive victims. The reactive victim provokes attacks by being aggressive, disruptive, argumentative, and antagonizing towards bullies and other children, and retaliates when he or she is bullied. Sometimes reactive victims are referred to as bully/victims because they straddle the fence of being a bully and/or victim. They are difficult to identify because they seem to be targets for bullies, but they often taunt bullies and other children. Not only do reactive victims fight back when bullied, but they sometimes channel their rage and anger into bullying others, especially those younger and weaker than themselves. In this way, some victims of bullies transform into bullies themselves, perpetuating the abuse and singling out new victims.

What are the effects of bullying?

Bullying is not a normal part of growing up. Victims of bullying suffer psychological and sometimes physical scars that last a lifetime. Victims report greater fear and anxiety, feel less accepted, suffer

from more health problems, and score lower on measures of academic achievement and self-esteem than students who are not bullied. Victims often turn their anger inward, which may lead to depression, anxiety, and even suicide. The experience of bullying is also linked with violence, as the fatal school shootings in Littleton, Colorado, and Jonesborough, Arkansas, have illustrated.

However, it's not just victims who are hurt by bullying. Bullies fail to learn how to cope, manage their emotions, and communicate effectively—skills vital to success in the adult world. Without intervention, bullies suffer stunted emotional growth and fail to develop empathy. Since bullies are accustomed to achieving their immediate goals by pushing others around, they don't learn how to have genuine relationships with other people. Instead, they externalize and blame others for their problems, never taking responsibility, nor learning how to care for another's needs. Bullies who don't learn other ways of getting what they want develop into adult bullies who are more likely to experience criminal troubles, be abusive toward their spouses, and have more aggressive children, perhaps continuing the cycle of bullying into the next generation.

Ending bullying: What works

The most effective way of addressing bullying is through comprehensive schoolwide programs. Schoolwide programs, developed collaboratively between school administration and personnel, students, parents, and community members, seek to change the school's culture to emphasize respect and eliminate bullying. So what has been shown to work in preventing and ending bullying?

- Increased awareness, understanding, and knowledge about bullying on the part of school staff, parents, and students
- Involvement of the wider community, including parents and service providers
- Integration of bullying-related content into the curriculum in ways that are appropriate to each grade
- Increased supervision and monitoring of students to observe and intervene in bullying situations
- Involvement of students
- Encouragement of students to seek help when victimized or witnessing victimization
- A plan to deal with instances of bullying
- Class and school rules and policies regarding bullying and appropriate social behavior
- Promotion of personal and social competencies (e.g., assertiveness, anger management, self-confidence, and emotional management skills)
- A schoolwide community of respect in which every student is valued
- Collaboration between parents, educators, service providers, and students to reinforce messages and skills across settings (e.g., home, school, community)
- Serious commitment to implementing the program on the part of administrators and school staff

Tara L. Kuther, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology at Western Connecticut State University, is the author of Gimme Your Lunch Money: A Guide to Bullies and Bullying (Parent's Guide Press, 2003).



Volunteer Code of Conduct

Along with adhering to the Child Protection Policy of Lakeside Presbyterian Church, youth and adult volunteers will, to the best of their abilities, follow these procedures:

- Volunteers should never leave a child unsupervised.
- Volunteers shall monitor the doorway while the child is using the restroom. This allows for the privacy of the child and the protection of the volunteer (not being alone with the child). If the volunteer is assisting a younger child, the doors to the facility must remain open.
- Volunteers should change diapers where they are visible by others.
- Volunteers shall not abuse children including:
 - Physical injury - strike, spank, shake, slap
 - Verbal abuse - yell, humiliate, degrade, threaten
 - Unjustifiable punishment - shaming, cruelty
 - Neglect - withholding food, water, basic care, etc.
- Any type of abuse will not be tolerated and may be cause for immediate dismissal.
- Volunteers shall respond to children with respect and consideration and treat all equally, regardless of sex, race, religion or culture.
- Volunteers shall respect a child's right not to be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and shall respect a child's right to say "no" about such matters. Other than diapering, children are not to be touched on areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.
- Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during volunteer hours, is prohibited.
- Profanity, inappropriate jokes and/or any kind of harassment, is prohibited.
- Volunteers shall portray a positive role model by maintaining an attitude of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.
- Volunteers shall not release children to anyone other than an authorized parent or guardian without their parent's or guardian's consent.
- Volunteers shall not bring, discuss or view inappropriate or unauthorized material at church related activities.
- Volunteers are to report any injuries, accidents or incidents involving children to appropriate staff members.