Friendship Community Baptist Church

Child Protection Policy

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**Introduction. A Letter from Pastor Robert**

*"Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes!”* ESV Matthew 18:5-7

My friend,

Jesus loved children! We are so thankful, that like Jesus, you have expressed an interest to love the children and youth at Friendship. We are excited about your potential partnership with us as we seek to lead young people to Jesus and develop them into fully mature followers of Jesus.

In the verses above, Jesus specifically shared two things. First, He stressed the importance of children. Receiving them is the same as receiving Him. For that reason, you are preparing to work with the most important ministry at Friendship, and the one where Jesus would be working if He showed up!

Secondly, Jesus gave one of the strongest warnings of all His teachings. Those who hurt children, or cause them to sin, would best be drowned and eliminated from the earth. In His love for children, Jesus recognized their vulnerability. This innocence makes them open to great teaching and can significantly build their faith, but it also makes them susceptible to great hurt and abuse. Jesus commands us to take this very seriously.

At Friendship, we focus on two forms of protection. First, we seek to protect the children God places in our care by carefully screening and training our staff and volunteers. Secondly, we strive to train our staff and volunteers to recognize dangerous situations our children may be involved in outside our ministry...whether at home, at school, or in the community. We live in a fallen world, and Jesus knew temptations and sin would come. He speaks great woe though on those through whom these sins come, and our responsibility is to protect children from these harms, and equip them to run, speak out, or otherwise appropriately deal with situations they encounter.

Please read this policy manual carefully and carefully follow the guidelines within. Should you have any questions about anything in the policy, please contact the Director of Ministries or other appropriate staff. If you have a concern about another staff or volunteer, or a concern about a child or parent, please follow the reporting procedures listed in the policy.

I'm grateful for your love for children and am confident Jesus will use you powerfully to share His gospel with them. If I can help you in any way, please let me know.

Loving the children with you and Jesus,

Pastor Robert

**Chapter 1. Purpose**

Children are our sacred trust from a loving God. Friendship Community Baptist Church (also referred to as Friendship) joyfully answers the call to provide a nurturing and dynamic Christian environment that will foster our children’s faith. We seek to ensure the safety of all children participating in the programs and activities of the church by establishing the following guidelines with regard to the conduct of adults and children. This Child Protection Policy directs that supervision of activities involving children and adults be conducted in a manner that minimizes the risk of abuse or of false allegations of abuse. We seek to protect the children who participate in the activities sponsored by Friendship Community Baptist Church from abuse and protect Friendship’s employees and volunteers from false allegations of abuse. Friendship can, through adherence to this Child Protection Policy, make every effort to ensure that persons placed in positions of responsibility and trust with respect to the children of the church and the community, are persons deserving of that trust and responsibility.

This Child Protection Policy shall be available in the church office to all visitors, members, and staff of the church as well as on the church website (fcbc.church)

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

Those who accept the responsibility of working with children at Friendship Community Baptist Church agree to:

* Treat children with respect and dignity;
* Do their best to prevent abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children participating in activities;
* Not engage in or condone acts of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse;
* Comply with Friendship Community Baptist Church’s Child Protection Policy; and
* Report any abuse, inappropriate behaviors, or possible policy violations

All members, visitors, and guests at Friendship should follow this policy. We ask anyone using the building, including community groups and others not directly affiliated with the church, to acknowledge and comply with this Child Protection Policy. The elders, senior pastor, Director of Friendship Kids and Director of Ministries of Friendship will assume the responsibility for overseeing the Child Protection Policy. Such responsibility includes supervision and implementation of the policy as well as providing opportunities for education and training about the policy. The intention of the Child Protection Policy is to protect. The Policy is not intended to substantially interfere with nurturing, teaching, and supervising of children.

**Chapter 2. Definitions**

For the purposes of this policy:

**Church:** Friendship Community Baptist Church.

**Child:** Any individual under the age of 18.

**Child Protection Policy Oversight Group:** Responsible for overseeing the policy, receiving reports of abuse, conducting training, reviewing applications, checking references, requesting background checks, etc…; consists of the senior pastor, the elders, the Director of Friendship Kids and the Director of Ministries as well as other council members requested to serve.

**Adult:** Any person age 18 or older.

**Trained Adult (TA):** any person age 18 or older, who also has:

* Attended a child protection policy training meeting and has a signed Child Protection Policy acceptance form on file.
* Completed pages 1 & 2 of the Application to Work with Children.

**Shepherd (Trained Adult with References):** any person age 18 or older who has:

* Attended a child protection policy training meeting and has a signed Child Protection Policy Acceptance on file.
* Completed a full application to work with children, including references.

**Lead Shepherd (Trained Adult with References and Background Check):** any person age 18 or older who has:

* Attended a child protection policy training meeting and has a signed Child Protection Policy Acceptance on file.
* Completed a full application to work with children, including references.
* Had a background check done with favorable results.

**Staff:** Anyone who works for Friendship Community Baptist Church for salary and wages.

**Volunteer:** Anyone who provides services for Friendship Community Baptist Church and receives no compensation in the form of salary, wages, or other monetary benefits.

**Child Abuse:** Injury of a child by an adult or older child that is not accidental. It may include physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

**Child Physical Abuse:** Non-accidental bodily injury of a child through physical contact or mistreatment.

**Child Sexual Abuse:** Any form of sexual contact or exploitation in which a child is being used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator. It includes behaviors that involve touching and non-touching aspects. Child sexual abuse is criminal behavior that involves children in sexual behaviors for which they are not personally, socially, and developmentally ready.

 Types of Child sexual abuse that involve touching include:

* + Fondling
	+ Oral, genital and anal penetration
	+ Intercourse
	+ Forcible rape

Types of child sexual abuse that do not involve touching include, but are not limited to:

* + Verbal comments
	+ Risque or sexual jokes
	+ Pornographic videos and photography
	+ Obscene phone calls
	+ Exhibitionism
	+ Allowing children to witness sexual activity

**Sexual abuse perpetrated by an adult** is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a child and an adult. This includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of the adult or child. Sexual behavior between a child and an adult is always considered to be forced whether or not the child consents to it.

**Sexual abuse perpetrated by a child** is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between children when there is no consent, when consent is not possible, or when one child has power over the other child. This includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of any of the children.

**Child Emotional Abuse:** Any language directed toward a child by an adult that is intended to cause emotional anxiety, pain, or other severe emotional disturbance. It is mental and emotional injury to a child that results in an observable and material impairment in the child’s growth, development, or psychological functioning.

**Neglect:** The failure to provide for a child’s basic needs or the failure to protect a child from harm.

**Economic Exploitation:** The deliberate misplacement, exploitation, or wrongful temporary or permanent use of a child’s belongings or money.

**Chapter 3. Supervision Guidelines**

**Two-Adult Guidelines**

Generally, two unrelated (e.g., not spouse, sibling, parent or child) adults should be present at all activities involving children. In times when two unrelated adults are not available, Friendship has cameras in each classroom and will require the door to be open during all times. In rooms that do not have cameras, if there are not two unrelated adults available, at least one additional adult must be present.

1. **Open Spaces.** When many people are in the building and contact with a child is incidental to what the adult is doing, it is sufficient that the single adult is in an open space and anyone can look in on them. Any place without a camera where the door can shut is not considered an open space.
2. **Teens.** An exception of the two-adult guideline is when two teenagers (ages 13 to 17) are watching children in the church building during adult classes and other adult-focused events. If this is a regular activity or if they are teaching the children the teens would be considered as needing the same authorization as adult or trained adult.
3. **Qualifications by Activity.** For certain types of activities, one or more of the adults should be a Trained Adult, Shepherd or Lead Shepherd. The chart below illustrates some of the common categories of activities that require one or more of the adults involved to have additional qualifications.
4. **Ratios.** Activity leaders should use good judgment in requiring that an appropriate number of adults participate and in considering the level of qualification for each adult.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Common Categories of Activities** | **Qualifications of Adults** | **Accommodations & Requirements** |
| **Overnights Away From Church** | At least one Lead Shepherd per trip and at least one Shepherd or higher of each gender, one of which may be the required Lead Shepherd | **Best Efforts should be made to ensure that:**-Children are given the appropriate privacy in the areas of sleeping, changing, and bathing.- Children and adults do not bathe in the same facility at the same time.- Children of the opposite gender do not change or bathe together.- Children of the opposite gender do not sleep in the same room together, unless they are siblings and a parent has requested this sleeping arrangement.- Children of the opposite gender may be permitted to sleep in the same room if an entire group of children along with the supervising adults are sleeping in one big room together. In these group sleepover situations, parents should be informed of the sleeping arrangements in advance and asked to give explicit permission for their child’s participation in the event. The required written permission slip from a parent or guardian should expressly acknowledge that the activity is co-ed.- The leader of the overnight activity has an emergency phone number for every parent/guardian of every child participating in the event. |
| **Overnights at Church** | One Lead Shepherd and at least one Shepherd or higher of each gender, one of which may be the required Lead Shepherd.Any other adults must be Trained Adult or higher | **Best Efforts should be made to ensure that:**-Children are given the appropriate privacy in the areas of sleeping, changing, and bathing.- Children and adults do not bathe in the same facility at the same time.- Children of the opposite gender do not change or bathe together.- Children of the opposite gender do not sleep in the same room together, unless they are siblings and a parent has requested this sleeping arrangement.- Children of the opposite gender may be permitted to sleep in the same room if an entire group of children along with the supervising adults are sleeping in one big room together. In these group sleepover situations, parents should be informed of the sleeping arrangements in advance and asked to give explicit permission for their child’s participation in the event. The required written permission slip from a parent or guardian should expressly acknowledge that the activity is co-ed.- The leader of the overnight activity has an emergency phone number for every parent/guardian of every child participating in the event. |
| **Day Trips Away From Church** | One Lead Shepherd per tripAny other adults must be Trained Adults or higher | **Best efforts should be made to:**-avoid having one child alone in a car with an adult, unless the adult is the child’s parent or guardian. |
| **Regular Activities with Children** | All adults regularly interacting with children should be Trained Adult or higher |  |
| **Junior Church**  | As a regular activity with children, Junior Church teachers should be Trained Adult or higherAlthough two adults are generally required for any activity involving children, during Junior Church, when children are attending classes in the spaces separated by dividers, it is permissible to have one adult present in each divided space, so long as there are at least two adults (Trained Adult or higher) present.Related adults may work together to teach Junior ChurchCameras are placed in all classrooms and, in case of having only one Trained Adult or higher, can be used in place of the second adult so long as the door is left open and the class size is not too large. |  |
| **One Time Activities** | We prefer that adults who work with children be Trained Adult or higher. However, when it would unreasonably impede an activity to require the adults working with children to be trained, two adults without training may volunteer to fulfill the two-adult guideline. If an adult repeatedly volunteers with children (substitute teacher, chaperone, parent-helper) that adult should become a Trained Adult. |  |
| **Non-church member use of building and non-church sponsored events** | Provide adults supervision for children; ideally having at least 2 adults with a group of children. | Make best efforts to comply with the spirit and intent of the Friendship Child Protection PolicyMake people aware in the group of the Child Protection Policy |

1. **Working Alone.** If absolutely necessary, an adult may work alone with children if there is visual access to the room. Prior to working alone with children, the adult should make a reasonable effort to ensure that a second adult is present or that another adult will check in without advance notice. The adult in charge will typically inform the parents that there is not a second adult present and that we have cameras in the room.

If only one adult is present or available, that adult can choose to cancel the event and inform the parents that there was not adequate supervision available to have the event.

**Personal Conduct**

1. Common expressions of affection (e.g. hugs), affirmation (e.g. pats on the back, high fives), blessings (e.g. laying on of hands), support or physical caretaking (e.g. diaper changing), when done without sexual connotations, are appropriate in this community of caring Christians. Expressions of affection shall not be excessive or imposed upon others. No child should be made to feel guilty if they do not wish to participate in these expressions of affection. Children will be made aware that they are free to participate or not, as they feel comfortable. Children must be allowed to use the bathroom on their own with adults verifying that the bathroom is safe (e.g. no unknown adults in the bathroom) and waiting at the entrance to the bathroom for the child to finish.
2. Adults shall not touch or interact with children in any way that is intended to be sexually stimulating. Any activity of this type is illegal, as well as a violation of trust & Christian standards.
3. Adults shall not engage in inappropriate behavior with children. Examples include but are not limited to: seeking private time with children, taking children on outings or overnight trips without other adults, swearing in front of children, or making suggestive comments to children.
4. Corporal punishment or verbal abuse is never permitted.

**Open Door Policy**

All spaces where activities with children are taking place, including but not limited to classrooms, child care rooms, and open spaces, shall be open to visits at any time without prior notice. These visits should be made in a manner that is not disruptive to the activity. When possible, the door to spaces where activities with children are taking place should remain open. If an activity is taking place in multiple locations within the building, the leader of the activity, if possible, should circulate among the locations.

**Discipline**

All adults leading programs involving contact with children will be guided by the following constructive discipline guidelines in order to maintain order:

1. If a child is behaving inappropriately, the adult will tell the child specifically what he or she is doing that is not acceptable and state what the expected behavior is. If this is not effective, the child should be guided to another activity.
2. If inappropriate behavior continues, the child may be placed in an area of the room where he or she will work alone, away from the other students for a brief period of time, the number of minutes not to exceed the age of the child.
3. If the child’s disruptive behavior continues after these steps have been taken, the child may be taken to the parent, Director of Friendship Kids, or Director of Ministries, or other responsible adults. If a child must be removed from a classroom or other activity, the situation will be discussed with his/her parents or guardians.
4. If misbehavior continues at an offsite location, the parent may be called to pick up the child.
5. In no case is an adult permitted to physically or verbally abuse a child who is misbehaving. There will be no use of corporate punishment.

**Permission Slips**

Children should have parental or guardian permission in advance to participate in any overnight activity or activity that takes places away from Friendship’s grounds. Permission should be given in writing and signed and dated by a parent or guardian. The permission slip will identify the name and date of the activity in which the child will be participating, as well as provide a basic description of what will occur.

**Transportation**

1. It is recommended that children be transported in groups rather than alone for church-sponsored activities. A child’s parent or guardian may give permission for an unaccompanied adult to drive a single child or children to or from a church-sponsored activity. Parental permission for transportation as part of a planned event should be obtained in writing. Text message is inadequate for permission.
2. Children legally required to ride in a car seat or booster seat must be transported using the appropriate safety seat. All other passengers shall wear a seatbelt while a vehicle is in motion or turned on.
3. This policy is not intended to prohibit staff or adult volunteers, when two are available to assist, from offering a ride home to children in an emergency situation. The adults should make reasonable attempts to contact parents or guardians prior to providing the ride. The adults providing the ride should inform the child’s parents or leave a message stating the expected departure, travel and arrival times. The child or children should ride in the back seat.
4. No person under the age of 21 shall drive other children as part of a church activity.
5. Every driver should have a valid driver’s license. Every driver should drive a registered and insured vehicle.
6. If a group is traveling in one vehicle, there must be two unrelated trained adults in the vehicle. If a group is traveling in more than one vehicle, care should be taken so that a single vehicle with one adult driver is not separated from the group for an extended length of time.

**Digital Privacy**

A key ingredient for a safe and healthy experience is the respect for privacy. Advances in technology have enabled forms of social interaction that can extend beyond the appropriate use of cameras, recording devices, and handheld electronics.

1. To ensure full participation and the opportunity for a positive experience, children may be prohibited from bringing handheld electronic devices (e.g. cell phones, laptops) to youth events or other church-sponsored functions. If children do bring these items to a church event, the adults in charge of the event can require these items be placed in a box or other location away from the children for the duration of the event and then returned to the children at the conclusion of the event.
2. Children and adults shall not send sexually explicit or suggestive texts, images, videos, or other inappropriate content electronically. Children and adults shall not post sexually explicit materials on websites or social media sites.
3. Children and adults can opt out of having their photos appear on the Friendship website, social media, and other publications.

**Chapter 4. Application, Screening and Training Guidelines**

**Application Process**

All adults who seek to work with children at Friendship should attend a Child Protection Policy training session or take the online course, complete an application to work with children, and sign the Child Protection Policy acceptance statement. Those adults who would like to work with children on a regular basis or plan and lead events will need to complete an Application to Work with Children and in some cases submit to a background check, depending on the level of teacher they are trying to obtain. The application requests information about the applicant’s suitability to work with children and asks for references that can verify the applicant’s experiences with children. Please see the “Qualification by Activity” table in chapter 3 to determine the level of information requested for the position you seek.

**Screening and Background Checks**

1. Applications are reviewed and an interview may be required with one or more members of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group. Applicants may also be asked to participate in an oral screening to determine suitability for work with children. Applications and related papers are confidential and maintained in locked files with access limited to the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group.
2. Friendship will use its discretion in reviewing and investigating the history of each applicant and in determining the activities for which a criminal background check is required. In general, any adults, both staff and volunteer, who will regularly have significant contact with children, be with children off the church property, chaperone overnight events, work in the nursery, or serve as youth group leaders may be asked to submit to a criminal background check.
3. Updated criminal background checks will be performed periodically, as deemed appropriate, usually every 5 years. Friendship may request the following information when conducting a background check:
	1. Social Security Information
	2. County courthouse check
	3. Nationwide criminal check
	4. Driving record

The cost of the background check will be paid for by Friendship.

1. In certain circumstances, Friendship may conduct a registered sex offender review, instead of or in addition to the criminal background check referenced above, by searching the individual’s name on the Department of Justice website at [www.nsopr.gov](http://www.nsopr.gov). The registered sex offender review may be repeated at various times throughout the individual’s service as an employee or volunteer who works with or comes into contact with children.
2. There will be a procedure for reviewing background checks and other sensitive information from references, oral screening, sex offender review, the application, etc…
	1. Types of information that may merit additional consideration include but are not limited to: criminal acts and criminal behavior, sex crimes, financial crimes, and drug crimes.
	2. When the background check (or other information) is received, two members of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group will review it. Each background check is considered individually and all decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. Child Protection Policy Oversight Group members will be reminded of the sensitive and confidential nature of the information they possess and asked that any discussions about the information be limited to the confidential Group meetings.
		1. If no information of concern is contained in the report, the applicant will be able to work with children.
		2. If there are any concerns, a meeting is called with three members of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group to discuss the report and a decision will be made by vote. Minutes of this meeting will be kept with the application materials.
			1. If an individual will not be allowed to work with children, the senior pastor or Director of Ministries will arrange a personal meeting with the individual to deliver the news.
			2. If an individual is allowed to work with children, the Director of Ministries will deliver the news.
	3. Applicants deemed by Friendship to pose a threat to children will not be permitted to participate in Friendship’s activities for children and may be required to be with an assigned chaperone when participating in general church activities where children may be present.

**Training**

1. We encourage all adults of the congregation to attend a Child Protection Policy training or to take the online course to better understand the goals of the policy and help to safeguard our children and the adults working with children. All adults seeking to work regularly with children must be trained on the requirements of Friendship’s Child Protection Policy. A signed Child Protection Policy Acceptance Statement will be evidence of completion of training. Adults working with children may be asked to retake the training periodically.
2. Communication about and an explanation of the Child Protection Policy will be included annually in all training and orientation for programs at Friendship involving contact with children. The responsibility for ensuring the Child Protection Policy is included as part of the training programs shall rest with the Director of Ministries or Director of Friendship Kids.

**Chapter 5. Reporting & Responding**

In maintaining our protection of children, adults are encouraged to report abuse, suspected abuse, or neglect. A person may suspect abuse by noting signs of abuse, being told of abuse, or witnessing conduct that is of concern. Some signs of sexual abuse are included in Appendix C. Do not hesitate to report abuse. When you report what you have seen or heard, you may help a child stay safe. If you have noticed the warning signs of abuse or neglect, please call. If you do not report your suspicions, the abuse of a child may continue. You should have a reasonable suspicion of the abuse, but you do not have to “prove” the abuse or be positive that it occurred. If you report in good faith, you are immune from civil or criminal liability.

**Reporting & Documentation**

1. If the child is in immediate danger or there is an emergency situation, call 911.
2. If you suspect that a child is physically, sexually, or emotionally abused or neglected, call the Anne Arundel or Calvert Child Protective Services, depending on the county the child lives in.
	1. Anne Arundel County – 410-421-8400
	2. Calvert County – 443-550-6969
3. All knowledge about abuse or suspected abuse should also be shared, as soon as possible, with one of the following – Senior Pastor, Director of Ministries, or Director of Children’s Ministry.
4. If inappropriate behavior or policy violations are observed that warrant concern but do not involve abuse, as soon as possible notify one of the following – Senior Pastor, Director of Ministries or Director Friendship Kids.
5. Misconduct by a member of the ordained clergy, staff or lay person in this congregation shall promptly be reported to the head of the elder council.
6. Please document what you have seen and to whom you have reported it. The Reporting & Responding Documentation Form (Appendix H) may be used to document details of abuse, suspected abuse, inappropriate behavior, or non-abuse policy violations. As soon as possible give a copy of any documentation to one of the following – Senior Pastor, Director of Ministries or Director of Children’s Ministry.
7. It is Friendship’s policy to report child abuse to the appropriate governmental authority, as required by state law and church regulations. Friendship will cooperate fully with government authorities in the investigations of allegations of child abuse.
8. Any concerned person can report suspicions of child abuse and neglect. Reports may be made confidentially or anonymously. Every state provides immunity from civil liability for persons who report suspected abuse in good faith and without malice. “In good faith” means that the person submitting the report believes what he or she is reporting to be true.

**Responding**

All persons involved in reporting or documenting any alleged incident of abuse should hold information in confidence, subject only to such disclosures as are required under church procedures and as necessary to facilitate investigation of allegations of abuse and resolution of the situation.

1. The Child Protection Policy Oversight Group will maintain a confidential written record of each report of abuse received.
2. The Child Protection Policy Oversight Group will determine a response which may include the alleged perpetrator being:
	1. Asked to meet with some or all of the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group to discuss the situation.
	2. Removed from any position involving contact with children at Friendship until the allegation is resolved.
	3. Asked to refrain from activities involving contact with children for a specified period of time or indefinitely, depending on the nature of the behavior.
	4. Reported to Child Protective Services and/or the police.
	5. Required to have an assigned escort (designated member of the congregation) any time he or she is at Friendship.
3. The senior pastor, Director of Ministries or Director of Friendship Kids will be in contact with parents and guardians of alleged victims and those accused of allegations, as necessary, and will make proper reports to government and law enforcement authorities. If the pastor is the perpetrator, the Director of Ministries and head of the elder council will assume those responsibilities.
4. If abuse occurs, a designated spokesperson for Friendship, generally the pastor or Director of Ministries or head of the elder council, will inform the congregation about the situation when appropriate to do so (i.e., disclosure of the situation will not jeopardize the investigation or cause undue hardship to the victim or the accused), protecting the identities of those involved as needed, to avoid rumors and the spread of false information.

**Reporting Abuse – Summary of Who to Contact and What to Do**

**Immediate danger or Emergency situations**

1. Call 911 to notify police of situation and request help as necessary.
2. Do what you can to make sure the child is safe.
3. As soon as possible, contact one of the following – senior pastor, Director of Ministries, Director of Friendship Kids, or head of the elder council – to report what has occurred.
4. Document what was observed and reported. You can use the Reporting and Responding Documentation Form (Appendix H).
5. Give the documentation to one of the following – senior pastor, Director of Ministries, Director of Friendship Kids or head of the elder council – as soon as possible.

**Suspected abuse or neglect**

1. Call the appropriate county Child Protective Services to make a report.
	1. Anne Arundel County – 410-421-8400
	2. Calvert County – 443-550-6969
2. Do what you can to make the child safe.
3. As soon as possible, contact one of the following – senior pastor, Director of Ministries or Director of Children’s Ministry – to report what has occurred.
4. Document what was observed and reported. You can use the Reporting & Responding Documentation Form (Appendix H).
5. Give the documentation to one of the following – senior pastor, Director of Ministries, Director of Children’s Ministry or head of elder council – as soon as possible.

**Observe inappropriate behavior or policy violations that warrant concern but are not abuse**

1. Call one of the following – senior pastor, Director of Ministries, Director of Children’s Ministry – to share your concern.
2. Document what was observed. You can use the Reporting & Responding Documentation Form (Appendix H).
3. Give the documentation to one of the following – senior pastor, Director of Ministries, Director of Children’s Ministry – as soon as possible.

**Appendix A: Important Phone Numbers & Contact Information**

**To Report Abuse or Suspected Abuse**

Police Emergency Phone Number: 911

Police Non-Emergency 24-hour Phone Number (Anne Arundel): 410-222-8610

Police Non-Emergency 24-hour Phone Number (Calvert): 410-535-2800

Anne Arundel County Child Protective Services: 410-421-8400

Calvert County Child Protective Services: 443-550-6969

Maryland State Hotline to Report Child Abuse: 800-332-6347

**To Contact Church Staff or Officers**

Pastor Robert Kendall: 240-476-8736

Director of Ministries, Fred Noble: 410-940-9848

Director of Friendship Kids:

Head of the Elder Council, Frank Mallory: 830-765-2141

**ChildHelp National Child Abuse Hotline**

The ChildHelp National Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453) is dedicated to the prevention of child abuse. Serving the United States, its territories, and Canada, the Hotline is staffed **24 hours a day, 7 days a week** with professional crisis counselors who, through interpreters, can provide assistance in 170 different languages. The Hotline offers crisis intervention, information, literature, and referrals to thousands of emergency, social service, and support resources. **All calls are anonymous and confidential.**

**Department of Justice National Sex Offender Public Website**

[www.nsopr.gov](http://www.nsopr.gov)

Includes a national sex offender search feature.

**State Criminal Records and Sex Offenders Registry Information**

Maryland State Police, 1201 Reisterstown Road, Pikesville, MD 21208

410-653-4200; [www.mdsp.maryland.gov](http://www.mdsp.maryland.gov)

Maryland Sex Offender Registry: <http://www.dpscs.state.md.us/sorSearch/>

**Maryland Statutes on Reporting Child Abuse**

<http://dhs.maryland.gov/child-protective-services/reporting-suspected-child-abuse-or-neglect/mandated-reporters/>

**Appendix B. What to Expect When Calling Child Protective Services**

Child Protective Services is established by the state of Maryland to receive and respond to concerns of abuse or neglect of children.

Any concerned resident who suspects that a child is abused or neglected should call 1-800-332-6347.

You are free to call and discuss concerns anonymously. Please provide as much information as possible about your concerns and the identity of the child. (Appendix H can be filled out to help with the details).

Actions taken by CPS are regulated to provide families with respect and fairness. Decisions and service plans are subject to review by supervisors and by the court. Dispositions of investigations may be appealed by the alleged perpetrator of abuse.

**What Should I Do When I Suspect Child Abuse or Neglect?**

You can call 1-800-332-6347 – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to report your suspicions.

Don’t hesitate. When you report what you’ve seen or heard, you may help a child to stay safe. If you’ve noticed the warning signs of abuse and neglect, please call. If you don’t report your suspicions, the abuse of a child might continue.

You should have a reasonable suspicion of the abuse, but you don’t have to “prove” the abuse or be positive that it occurred. If you report in good faith, you are immune from civil or criminal liability.

**Do I have to give my name?**

No, but eyewitness accounts about the suspected abuse will help the professional staff handle each situation effectively. Usually the name of the person making the report will be known only if court testimony is involved.

**After I report my suspicions, then what happens?**

Child Protective Services (CPS) investigates the situation to determine the risks to a child. If a case is “founded” (the abuse is verified), the caseworkers will recommend an action plan to protect the child.

**Will I be told what happens?**

No. To protect everybody involved, confidentiality rules are strictly enforced.

Do you suspect child abuse or neglect?

**Call 1-800-332-6347**

**Appendix C. Signs of Child Abuse**

**Identify at risk children!** One step in helping abused or neglected children is to recognize the warning signs. Report any suspected physical abuse, medical neglect, mental abuse, or sexual abuse inflicted upon a child by caretakers.

No one symptom alone proves child abuse, but when they appear often, or in combination with other symptoms, adults need to report them.

**It may be physical abuse when you see a child with:**

* Questionable burns, bites, bruises, broken bones, welts or black eyes
* Fading bruises or other marks after an absence from school or activities

**It may be physical abuse when the parent or other caregiver:**

* Offers an unconvincing explanation for an injury
* Describes the child as “bad” or “stupid”
* Uses harsh physical discipline

**It may be physical neglect when a child:**

* Steals food or money from classmates, often seems hungry
* Lacks medical or dental care
* Says that no one is at the home to care for him
* Lacks proper clothing in the winter
* Often appears dirty or tired

**It may be physical neglect when a parent or caregiver:**

* Abuses alcohol or drugs
* Appears indifferent to a child’s needs
* Seems apathetic or depressed
* Consistently fails to keep important appointments or to take medicines

**It may be emotional abuse or neglect when the child:**

* Displays self-destructive behavior, like cutting or burning himself
* Becomes overly compliant and passive or extremely demanding and aggressive
* Acts inappropriately adult-like (such as parenting other children) or inappropriately infantile (such as frequent rocking or head banging).
* Can’t make or keep friends.

**It may be emotional abuse or neglect when the parent or caregiver:**

* Constantly puts down or blames a child
* Rejects the child outright
* Makes unreasonable demands on the child without regards to his abilities or developmental level
* Gets defensive or refuses to consider help for the child’s school problems

**It may be sexual abuse when the child:**

* Can’t walk or sit easily
* Has injuries or redness around the genitals
* Displays an unusual sexual knowledge or behavior, such as being seductive
* Withdraws, seems depressed or can’t get along with peers
* Abuses drugs or alcohol
* Has unexplained money or gifts
* Expresses thoughts of suicide and low self-worth

**It may be sexual abuse when the parent or caregiver:**

* Was sexually abused as a child himself
* Abuses drugs or alcohol
* Lacks social and emotional contacts outside his family
* Restricts a child’s contact with those of the opposite sex

Following are some additional common signs of child sexual abuse that may warrant reporting:

**Physical signs:**

Unusual lacerations and bruises

Difficulty with urination

Torn or bloody undergarments

Sexually transmitted diseases

**Behavioral Signs:**

A sudden change in behavior

Nervous or hostile behavior toward adults

Avoiding a person or situation that the child would normally have been involved in

Sexual self-consciousness

“Acting out” of sexual behavior

**Verbal Signs:**

“\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ does things to me when we’re alone.”

“I don’t like to be alone with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”

“\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ fooled around with or touched me”

“\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ says mean things to me.”

For additional information, you can read *Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect: Signs and Symptoms* published by the Child Welfare Information Gateway and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, found online at <http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/signs.pdf>

**Appendix D. Child Protection Policy Acceptance Statement**

Please read the copy of the Child Protection Policy provided to you. Please sign below to indicate that you have read and understood the Policy and agree to comply with the policies and procedures outlined therein when working with children.

I, (print name) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, accept the responsibility to nurture the Christian faith and well-being of the children of Friendship Community Baptist Church and to care for them as Christ cares for me. “Jesus said, ‘Whoever welcomes a child welcomes me.’” (Matthew 18:5) Children are our present and our future, our hope, our teachers, our inspiration. The are full participants in the life of the church and in the realm of God. Jesus also said, “If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea.” (Matthew 18:6)

I have read and understood the Child Protection Policy and accept it. I promise to exhibit appropriate behavior and conduct when working with children. I hereby affirm that I have not resigned from or been terminated from a position for reasons relating to abuse or misconduct, as defined in the Policy statement. I further affirm that I am not a registered sex offender nor do I have any pending or resolved cases with the civil authorities concerning the welfare of children. I affirm that I will not use my position of trust in the church to abuse or harm any child.

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY OF FRIENDSHIP COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Information**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name** |  |
| **Mailing Address** |  |
| **City** | **State, Zip** |
| **Telephone (Home)** | **Telephone (Cell)** |
| **Email Address** |  |

**Appendix E. Friendship Community Baptist Church Application to Work with Children**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

DATE OF APPLICATION

This application is a confidential part of a process to help the church provide a safe, nurturing environment for our children. Persons responsible for the supervision and care of our children are in a special position of trust and confidence. Therefore, persons seeking to work with children at Friendship Community Baptist Church are asked to complete this application.

**Personal Information (please show photo identification when submitting form)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **NAME** |  |
| **MAILING ADDRESS** |  |
| **CITY** | **STATE, ZIP** |
| **TELEPHONE (HOME)** | **TELEPHONE (CELL)** |
| **EMAIL ADDRESS** |  |

* **How long have you been attending Friendship Community Baptist Church?**
* **Are you a member of the church? Yes No**
* **Are you 18 years or older? Yes No**
* **Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offense? Yes No**
* **Have you ever plead guilty or “no contest” to any criminal offense? Yes No**
* **Have you ever been charged with or convicted of child neglect? Yes No**
* **Have you ever been charged with or convicted of physical abuse or sexual abuse of children or adults? Yes No**
* **Have you plead guilty or “no contest” to any neglect or abuse? Yes No**
* **Have any complaints or allegations of misconduct involving children ever been made against you? Yes No**

**If you answered “yes” to any of the questions 4 through 9, please explain, including which state the conviction or charge occurred. Use a separate sheet of paper.**

**Church or Youth Experience**

List previous work, paid or volunteer, involving young people. Please provide the organization, location, type of work, and approximate dates.

Please share your talents and strengths in working with young people

**PERSONAL REFERENCES**

Please furnish personal references from churches, schools, community and civic organizations where past work with children was done, if there is no previous work with children, include other volunteer work or activities.

**NAME TELEPHONE**

**ADDRESS**

**EMAIL**

Position of person named above:

Type of work done:

**NAME TELEPHONE**

**ADDRESS**

**EMAIL**

Position of person named above:

Type of work done:

**NAME TELEPHONE**

**ADDRESS**

**EMAIL**

Position of person named above:

Type of work done:

I understand that the Child Protection Policy Oversight Group of Friendship Community Baptist church may contact the references I have provided as part of the process of reviewing this application. I hereby release from any liability any person or organization that provides information. I certify that the information I have provided is true and correct.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

APPLICANT’S SIGNATURE

|  |
| --- |
|  |

DATE

Received By: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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

**Appendix F. Background Check Authorization Form**

I hereby authorize Friendship Community Baptist Church and their choice for background check services to procure a consumer report which I understand may include the following information:

* Social Security Identification
* County Courthouse Check
* Nationwide criminal Check
* Driving Record
* Sex Offender Registry Check

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Current Street Address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Current Congregation Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Previous Addresses for last 10 years, including county of residence

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Background Verification Disclosure

Friendship Community Baptist Church will obtain a consumer investigative report. The investigative consumer report may include information regarding your character, general reputation, personal characteristics or mode of living. The following Consumer Reporting Agency will be asked to prepare the report:

**Appendix G. Reference Check Form**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

|  |
| --- |
| Applicant Name |
| Reference Contacted |
| Name of Person Contacting Reference |
| Method of Contact: Phone, Letter, Email |

“Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I am contacting you on behalf of Friendship Community Baptist Church in Dunkirk MD. (Name of applicant) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ applied to work with children at Friendship Community Baptist Church and listed you as a reference and gave us written permission to contact you. Would you please answer the following questions to the best of your ability? This should only take a few minutes and is very important to our church programs. Thank you.”

1. How long have you known the applicant?
2. In what capacity?
3. Based on your experience, would you say the applicant would work well with children? Why or why not?
	1. Pre K
	2. K-6
	3. Junior High
	4. Senior High
4. Would you entrust your child to this person?
5. Are you aware of any problems that would affect his/her work with children?
6. Are you aware of any allegations of child abuse?
7. Any other comments?

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix H. Reporting & Responding Documentation Form p. 1**

Name of person providing information:

Name of person recording information (if applicable):

Individual of concern:

Name of child involved:

Date & Time of occurrence:

Type of concern:

* Inappropriate behavior with a child
* Non-abuse policy violation with a child
* Possible risk of abuse
* Suspected abuse
* Observed abuse
* Other

Please describe the situation. Attach additional sheets as needed.

1. What happened?
2. Where did it happen?
3. When did it happen?
4. Who was involved?
5. Who else was present?
6. Did anyone observe the behavior of concern?
7. Was the parent/guardian of the child present?
8. Did the parent/guardian observe the behavior of concern?
9. What was the parent’s/guardian’s reaction?
10. If the parent/guardian was not present, do you know if the parent/guardian has been notified?

**Reporting & Responding Documentation Form p. 2**

Was the incident reported to the police or 911?

Was the incident reported to Child Protective Services?

If reported to the police or CPS, what was their response and recommended course of action?

Who from the church was contacted?

To your knowledge, has this type of situation happened before? If so, please describe what you know.

If so, do you know what, if any, action was taken? Who was involved? Who was questioned?

Do you know if police or Child Protective Services were called for the earlier situation?

Have you spoken with anyone else about this incident?

If yes, who?

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

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Reporting & Responding Documentation Form p. 3**

Name of person being interviewed for this report:

Name of person recording the information:

Date report was taken:

To your knowledge, has this type of situation happened before? If so, please describe what you know.

If so, do you know what, if any, action was take? Who was involved? Who was questioned?

Do you know if police or Child Protective Services were called for the earlier situation?

What is the follow-up plan?

Does anyone else need to be notified?

Will the situation need monitoring?

Report taken and submitted by:

Telephone number:

Address:

**Appendix I. Adult Participation & Expectations**

Thanks for volunteering your time and energy to the Friendship children & youth. If you have any questions about the event you are attending, please ask so we can clarify. We will provide as much information about the event as is available through email and conversation. One of the main purposes of children & youth events is to provide an opportunity for caring adults to connect with children & youth and to build relationships that will last beyond the end of the event.

Expectations:

* Complete Child Protection training
* Complete pages 1 & 2 of the Application to Work with Children
* Sign the Child Protection Policy Acceptance Statement
* Complete an application for a background check if you will be staying overnight with the youth or children
* Attend any pre-event meetings, if scheduled
* Help with event preparations such as planning, shopping, etc…
* Participate with the children or youth during the entire duration of the event or trip
* Be a triple-A adult – Authentic, Available, Affirming
* Try your best to meet and engage all children or youth equally
* Be on time to all scheduled meetings, happenings, etc…
* Participate in all scheduled happenings
* If you feel comfortable leading a prayer or devotion please do so

**Thank you!!!**

**Have fun!!!**

**Appendix J. Friendship Community Baptist Church Website Photo Opt-Out Form**

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, do not want my photo to appear on the Friendship Community Baptist Church website or social media. I also do not was the photos of these family members to be used on the Friendship Community Baptist Website or social media.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I understand all efforts will be made to ensure that these photos do not appear, though sometimes in group shots where it is hard to distinguish individuals, we may not be able to identify people well and choose to use a photo containing one of these individuals on the site. All efforts will be made to follow this directive. If we have accidentally posted a photo including one of the individuals listed above, please contact the church office for removal of the photo. Please attach photos of the above-listed individuals to this sheet for identification purposes. These photos will not be released.

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

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_