



GuideOne Center for Risk Management: Components of a Sexual Misconduct/Child Protection Policy

The following sections are the key components of a sexual misconduct/child protection policy. Due to the diverse laws within various states, it is important that you have any policy you develop reviewed by legal counsel. It is also suggested that you view policies utilized by other churches and consult with other children and youth serving organizations.

I. Purpose

This should be an overview of why the policy is important and focus on the purpose behind it. You may include biblical or philosophical statements. Statistics of abuse may also be shared.

II. Definitions

This section should define what laws constitute abuse in your state. It is suggested that you contact local schools, law enforcement agencies and consult with a lawyer. The following are the minimum as to what definitions should be included.

- Child Abuse
 - Physical
 - Neglect
 - Sexual

III. Employees, Volunteers, Mentor Selection

- Six-month waiting rule for new attendees prior to working with minors
 - Anyone seeking to work with children and youth should be known by people of the church for at least six months prior to being allowed to interact with minors.
- Application forms and process
 - All employees and volunteers should fill out an application. The form should be included in the policy.
- Reference checks
 - All employees and volunteers should have references completed. Institutional (organizational) references are preferred.

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This material is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to give specific legal or risk management advice, nor are any suggested checklists or actions plans intended to include or address all possible risk management exposures or solutions. You are encouraged to retain your own expert consultants and legal advisors in order to develop a risk management plan specific to your own activities. For more information, contact the GuideOne Center for Risk Management at (877) 448-4331, ext. 5118 for Church and Schools, or ext. 5175 for Senior Living Communities.

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- Background checks
 - Share how and what checks need to be completed and who will conduct them. How the information will be secured and used is important to have in your policy. Also clearly state that the use of release forms is required for each person having a check run. Copies of the form should be included.
 - Job descriptions
 - Each employee and volunteer should have a job description. They should be a part of the policy.

IV. Post-Selection Guidelines

- Training
 - State what training is required for each position
- Supervision

Include in the policy the requirement that no child be alone with an adult.
- Violations

Identify what procedures will be followed if any policy violations occur for both employees and volunteers.
- Teen workers

Identify who may work with minors. It is recommended that no one under the age of 14 be allowed to work with minors. Those 14-18 may do so only if supervised by an adult.

IV. Policies

- Two unrelated person/No minor alone rule
 - There should be a policy that forbids a child from being alone with one adult. Other children and/or another unrelated adult should be present.
- Open door policy
 - Classroom doors should remain opened unless there is door glass in the door or beside it.

- Teacher/student ratios

- Also include desired adult to child ratios.

Note: See example below. This example represents possible minimum levels. The ratio of teacher or supervisor to child should increase based on the hazard level and isolation of the activity.

Birth – 3 yrs	1:4
4 yrs. – 5 yrs.	1:5
6 yrs. – 8 yrs.	1:6
9 yrs. – 14 yrs.	1:8
15 yrs. – 18 yrs.	1:10

- Identification

- Articulate how you will identify adults who should have access to children's areas. Also share how you will identify children that are dropped off in the nursery or Sunday School area and how you will allow them to be picked up (who may pick up, when, etc.)

- Restroom Guidelines

- Part of your policy should include restroom guidelines. Whenever possible, children should not be in the restroom alone with an adult.

V. Reporting Guidelines

The process for internal, law enforcement/child abuse authorities, and insurance reporting of allegations should be explained in detail. Check with local schools and an attorney to make sure you are complying with your state requirements.

VI. Signed Statement of Policy

A signed and dated form indicating employees and volunteers have read and understand the policies should be utilized and kept as part of your records.