

**Policy for the Protection of Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults**  
**Second Presbyterian Church**

"Whoever welcomes a child in my name, welcomes me." Matthew 18:6

Second Presbyterian Church has a rich history of ministry with children, youth and vulnerable adults. Second Church stresses the sanctity of human life and the importance and worth of each individual as a child of God. The church recognizes that formal, written policies and procedures help to prevent the opportunity for injury, abuse and neglect. These procedures are adopted for the protection of children, youth, vulnerable adults, our employees, our volunteers, and our church family as a whole.

**I. Definitions**

"Child" is newborn through elementary age (typically six weeks - 10 years old).

"Youth" is a middle or high school student (typically 11-17 years old).

"Vulnerable Adult" is an adult who lacks the physical or mental capacity to provide for their daily needs.

"Adult" is a person 18 years old or older.

"Caregivers" are employees or volunteers at least 18 years old with direct supervision of Children, Youth or Vulnerable Adults.

"Care" is supervision of non-related persons less than 18 years of age or recognized as Vulnerable Adults who are attending Church activities.

**II. Selection**

An employee or volunteer, on behalf of Second Presbyterian Church ("Church") who is at least 18 years old ("Applicant") and who desires to Care for a Child, Youth or Vulnerable Adult shall meet the requirements in section II.A. The Church shall have the final right to determine whether or not to utilize the Applicant as a Caregiver even if the requirements in sections II.A. have been met.

A. Prior to providing any Care:

1. the Applicant has completed and filed with the Church an application which includes:
  - a. the name, address, date of birth and phone number of the Applicant.
  - b. three (3) character references, including contact information for each.
  - c. disclosure and explanation of any allegation, charge or conviction of child abuse or neglect against the Applicant.
  - d. disclosure of drug or alcohol abuse by the Applicant.

- e. authorization and information necessary for a background check of the Applicant to be conducted.
  - f. agreement by the Applicant to comply with this policy.
2. it has been determined that the Applicant
- a. is at least 5 years older than the oldest Youth to be cared for by the Applicant
  - b. has never been charged or convicted of any child abuse or neglect.
  - c. does not abuse drugs or alcohol.
  - d. is an employee or member of the Church OR has been an active participant in the Church for at least 6 months prior to Care.
  - e. has completed child protection training provided by the Church.

**III. Care**

No Caregiver shall on behalf of the Church, whether as an employee or volunteer, Care for any Child, Youth or Vulnerable Adult unless, throughout the Care, the requirements in III.A AND III.B are met:

- A. At least two Caregivers whether employee or volunteer, are present at all times unless
- 1. the Care is publically visible to other Adults OR
  - 2. the Caregiver is employed by the Church as a (i) minister, (ii) licensed therapist, or (iii) program coordinator, OR
  - 3. A parent or legal guardian of the Child, Youth or Vulnerable Adult has provided written consent to the Church for the Care to be provided by a single Caregiver.

AND

- B. The ratio of the number of Caregivers to Children or Youth is not less than

| <u>Age of Youngest Youth</u> | <u>Ratio</u>                     |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Infant (*)                   | 1 Caregiver to 4 Children        |
| Toddler (**)                 | 1 Caregiver to 5 Children        |
| 2 Years                      | 1 Caregiver to 6 Children        |
| 3 Years                      | 1 Caregiver to 10 Children       |
| 4 Years                      | 1 Caregiver to 12 Children       |
| 5 Years                      | 1 Caregiver to 15 Children       |
| 6 Years and Older            | 1 Caregiver to 20 Children/Youth |

(\*) "Infant" means a Child from six (6) weeks of age to the time the Child is beginning to walk.

(\*\*) "Toddler" means a Child from the time the Child is beginning to walk until the age of two (2) years.

- C. As a part of the Church's ministry, people interact regularly with Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults. These volunteers, who are not Caregivers are not subject to this policy and are themselves, as they are volunteering, being supervised by two Caregivers who have met the above requirements.
- D. Youth who regularly volunteer with Children:
  - a. complete and file with the Church an application which includes:
    - i. the name, address, date of birth and phone number of the Applicant
    - ii. three (3) character references, including contact information for each.
    - iii. agreement by the Applicant to comply with this policy
  - b. complete child protection training provided by the Church.

#### **IV. Reporting**

Any person ("Reporter") who Cares for any Child, Youth or Vulnerable Adult, on behalf of the Church, has reason to believe that a Child, Youth or Vulnerable Adult is a victim of abuse or neglect, whether at Church or in another setting (home, school, etc.), must immediately report the matter orally to any one of the following (who is not involved in the matter): the Reporter's immediate supervisor, the Senior Pastor, an Associate Pastor, or the Director of Finance and Operations of the Church.

*Future revisions need to outline next steps in reporting.*

#### **V. Violations**

The Church may preclude, suspend or dismiss any person who violates this policy from Care of any Child, Youth or Vulnerable Adult on behalf of the Church, whether as an employee or volunteer, or take any other action with respect thereto.