



Child Protection Policy and Plan

9905, H.G. Trueman Road, P.O. Box 475, Lusby, MD 2065. Tel: 410-326-0033, email: office@hfpc.org. website: www.hfpc.org

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Policy

Goal and Purpose

1. The two main goals of this Plan are to prevent child sexual abuse and to provide policy and procedures to respond to actual or apparent instances of such abuse. The Plan consists of three documents summarized as follows:
 - a. Child Protection Policy: This document lays out our basic stance toward child sexual abuse protection. It summarizes the Bible's teaching on protecting children; establishes our core beliefs and guiding principles on the matter; and communicates our fundamental commitments in regard to child protection.
 - b. Child Protection Procedures: This document contains specific procedures for preventing and responding to child sexual abuse.
 - c. Child Protection Code of Conduct: This document designates the safe behaviors that we are committed to abide by and uphold.
2. Purpose: This Plan is intended to protect children from sexual abuse while those children are under the cognizance of Harvest Fellowship.
3. Applicability: This Plan applies to all persons in attendance at and during Harvest Fellowship events on or off campus.

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Policy

1. Introduction:

This document lays out our basic stance toward child sexual abuse protection. It summarizes the Bible's teaching on protecting children; establishes our core beliefs and guiding principles on the matter; and communicates our fundamental commitments in regard to child protection.

2. The Biblical Foundation:

a. Our God is a God of light. We are called to walk in his ways as his children of light.

(1) John 12:35–36: “So Jesus said to them, ‘The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.’”

(2) 1 John 1:5: “This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.”

(3) Ephesians 5:8–9: “For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true).”

b. Children are special in God's sight. They are a precious gift, made in God's own image. Jesus rebuked his disciples in righteous anger when they tried to prevent children from coming to him. Jesus welcomes children and gives them a central place in his kingdom.

(1) Genesis 1:27: “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”

(2) Psalm 127:3: “Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward.”

(3) Mark 10:13–14: “And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, ‘Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God.’”

c. God hears the prayers of children who are abused. Some of Jesus' harshest words were reserved for those who would cause a child to stumble.

(1) Exodus 22:21–24: “You shall not wrong a sojourner or oppress him, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. You shall not mistreat any widow or fatherless child. If you do mistreat them, and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry, and my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless.”

(2) Psalm 10:17–18: “O Lord, you hear the desire of the afflicted; you will strengthen their heart; you will incline your ear to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, so that man who is of the earth may strike terror no more.”

(3) Matthew 18:5–6: “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.”

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Policy

- d. Children are valued by God, but are vulnerable spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally, and morally. God hates the oppression of the vulnerable. God recognizes the temptation for the powerful to use their power for the exploitation of the weak and condemns anyone who would thus abuse his power.
- (1) Deuteronomy 10:17–19: “For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.”
 - (2) Psalm 9:9: “The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.”
 - (3) Luke 4:18–19: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”
- e. As his redeemed image bearers, his children of light, God calls us to speak up and use our power for the protection of the vulnerable. When we intervene on behalf of the vulnerable, we are reflecting the moral beauty of our God. When we remain silent, or we abuse power by harming the vulnerable, we are denying the glorious moral purity of God. This is why the abuse of power is so personal to God.
- (1) Leviticus 19:13–15: “You shall not oppress your neighbor or rob him. The wages of a hired servant shall not remain with you all night until the morning. You shall not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall fear your God: I am the Lord. You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor.”
 - (2) Job 29:11–17: “When the ear heard, it called me blessed, and when the eye saw, it approved, because I delivered the poor who cried for help, and the fatherless who had none to help him. The blessing of him who was about to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my justice was like a robe and a turban. I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. I was a father to the needy, and I searched out the cause of him whom I did not know. I broke the fangs of the unrighteous and made him drop his prey from his teeth.”
 - (3) Proverbs 31:8–9: “Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.”
 - (4) Ecclesiastes 4:1: “Again I saw all the oppressions that are done under the sun. And behold, the tears of the oppressed, and they had no one to comfort them! On the side of their oppressors there was power, and there was no one to comfort them.”
 - (5) Isaiah 1:16–17: “Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow’s cause.”
 - (6) James 1:27: “Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.”

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Policy

3. Core Beliefs: Promote, Protect, Prevent and Respond

- a. We believe in **promoting** healthy relationships between adults and children.
- b. We believe that **protecting** children is an adult's responsibility.
- c. We believe in **preventing and responding** to sexual abuse with training and accountability.

4. Guiding Principles:

The following principles guide our child protection plan. They flow from the biblical foundation and our core beliefs.

- a. **An intergenerational church is God's covenant plan:** Harvest Fellowship highly values the role that loving, godly adults have in discipling and nurturing children and how children bless adults in the church. Our congregation vows, at a covenant child's baptism, to "undertake the responsibility of assisting the parents in the Christian nurture of this child." (PCA BCO 56-5)
- b. **Protecting children honors Christ:** Jesus holds the Church accountable for protecting our children, and calls us to follow his lead in loving children. Good policies, procedures, systems and structures facilitate mutual accountability as we submit to Christ.
- c. **We must proactively work to protect children:** Preventing and responding to child sexual abuse takes a heavy investment of time, money and resources. However, the spiritual, emotional, physical and financial toll of child sexual abuse is far greater if passively allowed.
- d. **Up-to-date child sexual abuse prevention is in everyone's best interest:** Churches that practice good child sexual abuse prevention procedures protect children as well as adults who serve children because training and accountability will build trust among parents, volunteers and church staff.
- e. **Child Sexual Abuse prevention requires humility:** As Christians, we confess our spiritual brokenness and sin, and therefore, we must all humbly submit to boundaries established around children. Moreover, those who have committed child sexual abuse and other crimes against children will not be allowed to serve with children.
- f. **The church is a place for sinners:** We want to be a church that is safe for hurting, broken people to come and find grace, hope and healing. Prioritizing child sexual abuse prevention creates an environment of humility and accountability where such healing can take place.
- g. **First-rate child sexual abuse prevention:** Because any setting where children are present may be sought out by those wishing to harm them, we aspire to be a place where parents walk in and sense that their children will be loved and safe. We also want to conform to the most up-to-date laws and research about child sexual abuse prevention. In this way, Harvest Fellowship can be known as the safest place for children.
- h. **Protecting every child:** Harvest Fellowship's child sexual abuse prevention plan applies to any child, eighteen and under, at any Harvest Fellowship event.

5. Key Commitments:

- a. We have a zero-tolerance policy for child sexual abuse.
- b. We report child sexual abuse to the civil authorities.

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Policy

- c. All employees and volunteers will be screened according to the Child Protection Procedures of the church.
- d. We do not employ anyone who has been convicted of or confessed to sexually abusing a child.
- e. We do not allow anyone to volunteer who has been convicted of or confessed to sexually abusing a child.
- f. Any employee or volunteer accused of sexually abusing a child will be immediately suspended from serving children and we will do our best to ensure they have no access to children in our church or in the community until we have clarity on the situation.
- g. Any employee or volunteer who does not abide by or help guard our child sexual abuse prevention procedures and our code of conduct will not be allowed to work with children or youth.

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Procedures

1. Introduction

Children have a special place as members of God's covenant family (Genesis 17:7). They are a precious gift, made in God's own image (Psalm 127:3; Genesis 1:27). Jesus commanded his disciples to "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14). Jesus places children at the center of his kingdom. At the same time, Jesus knows that children occupy a vulnerable place in the world. Jesus reserved some of his harshest words for those who would harm or belittle children. (Matthew 18:5-6). God charges his people to care for and protect his children. (Deuteronomy 10:17-19; Psalm 9:9; Psalm 10:17-18; Leviticus 19:13-15; Job 29:11-17).

We are committed to promoting a safe environment for all children at Harvest Fellowship. We believe in promoting healthy relationships between adults and children. We will not tolerate any form of abusive sexual behavior toward children. The responsibility for promoting a safe environment for the protection of children rests on all adults at church. We have committed to the following procedures as we seek to prevent and respond to sexual abuse with sound training and appropriate accountability.

2. Definitions

- a. Child: Any person under the age of 18 years old or any person whose mental capacity is that of a minor.
- b. Adult volunteer: Any person at least 18 years of age who routinely interacts with children in support of church ministry.
- c. Student Volunteer: Any person, age 13-18, who assists adults working with children as part of a church-sponsored activity or program.
- d. Employee: Any adult paid for their work at Harvest Fellowship.
- e. Child Sexual Abuse: Any sexual act between an adult and a child, or between two children, when one exerts power over the other; forcing, coercing or persuading a child to engage in any type of sexual act; sexual abuse also includes non-contact acts such as exhibitionism, exposure to pornography, voyeurism, and communicating in a sexual manner by phone or internet.
- f. Mandated Reporter: Any person who is required by law to report when they have a reason to believe child sexual abuse has occurred. However, in keeping with biblical principles, for the sake of vulnerable children who cannot protect themselves, all adults are morally obligated to report sexual abuse.
- g. Harvest Fellowship Event: A Session-approved event. Examples of Session-approved events are worship services and activities complimentary to the worship service, Sunday School, small groups, children and youth activities and church picnics.
- h. Session: The governing body of Harvest Fellowship, which consists of the pastor and the ruling elders.
- i. D2D committee: Diapers to Diplomas committee serves alongside the youth leaders and Children Ministry coordinator to provide support and advice.

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Procedures

3. Screening and Eligibility for Service

- a. All adults who work with children will submit the necessary information for a national, criminal background check before being allowed access to children. This information must be updated by all adults who work with children every three years. Any adult who has been convicted of child sexual abuse or other violent crimes will not be eligible for employment at Harvest Fellowship or service as a volunteer within the church's nursery, children's and student ministries.
- b. All adults and student volunteers who work with children will give three non-related, personal references who can answer questions about how said staff or volunteer interacts with children. A designated person shall check all references.
- c. Applications will be reviewed by a member of the D2D committee or the Children & Youth Ministry leader.
- d. All adults and student volunteers who regularly work with children should be members of Harvest Fellowship. Exceptions are made for non-members who regularly attended worship services for a minimum of six months and have been approved by an elder/Session.
- e. No one with a criminal history relating to child molestation will be allowed to work with children or teens regardless of how far in the past the incident(s) occurred.
- f. All workers will complete a mandatory training program within the time specified before they will be allowed to continue working with children and teens.
- g. Background checks and training will be renewed every three years before being allowed to continue working with the children and youth.
- h. A list of adults and student volunteers regularly working with children will be submitted to the Session for approval.

4. Reporting

God has ordained civil authorities to be his servant. As God's servant, he gives civil authorities the power of the sword to punish those who do evil. God calls us to submit to these authorities as they carry out their God-ordained role to punish evil (Romans 13:1-7; I Peter 2:13-14). A key aspect of our submission to the God-ordained civil authorities is to report the crime of child sexual abuse. Child sexual abuse is not only a sin, but a felony. All officers of the church are required to report any allegations of sexual abuse.

- a. **Witness:** You witness or discover an act of sexual abuse. In this situation you must demonstrate courage. You must intervene and move the child to a safe place and call the authorities immediately. Then, contact the pastor or a ruling elder and complete our "Knowledge of Suspected Child Abuse" form. The pastor or elder can then ensure the perpetrator has no further access to children at the church and can initiate appropriate pastoral care for all parties.
- b. **Disclosure:** A child tells you of sexual abuse he experienced. In this situation, remain calm and keep the child talking with open-ended questions rather than leading questions (for example, "What happened next? Can you tell me more?") as long as the child feels comfortable. When the child has

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Procedures

finished the disclosure, tell the child you believe him, it is not his fault, and you are going to help him. After the initial disclosure, do not try to conduct a lengthy interview, but as soon as is practical, while being sensitive to the child, call the authorities. Then, contact the pastor or a ruling elder and complete our “Knowledge of Suspected Child Sexual Abuse” form.

Special Note: When there is a disclosure of sexual abuse, no one, not even the parents or the pastor ought to conduct another interview of the child or conduct an internal investigation. The authorities or child advocacy center will have someone who is trained to conduct a child forensic interview. The more interviews the child has, the harder it is on the child and on those tasked with investigating and potentially prosecuting the crime.

- c. Reasonable Cause: You have reasonable cause that child sexual abuse has occurred. Reasonable cause does not require absolute proof. Instead, reasonable cause means one or more signs of child sexual abuse are present. After reporting the reasonable cause, then contact the pastor or a ruling elder and complete our “Knowledge of Suspected Child Sexual Abuse” form.

Sometimes there are no visible signs of child sexual abuse, but common signs include:

- A. Bleeding, bruising, pain or other signs of trauma around the genitalia (please note when changing a diaper this is very different from a diaper rash)
- B. Sexually transmitted disease in a child
- C. Sexual language and behavior which are not age-appropriate (including promiscuous behavior)
- D. Repeated boundary violations by an adult or student volunteer (e.g., you find an adult or student volunteer isolated with a child or pushing the limits of inappropriate touch, even after being warned not to do so)
- E. Emotional and behavioral signs such as withdrawal, fear, depression, anger or swings in behavior and mood
- F. Difficulty sitting or walking without pain

5. Incident Response

When a report is made about suspected child sexual abuse, all employees and volunteers of Harvest Fellowship are encouraged to cooperate fully with any legal investigation.

After contacting the authorities, all employees and volunteers at Harvest Fellowship should document their actions and knowledge with the “Knowledge of Suspected Child Sexual Abuse” form and turn the form into the church office in a sealed envelope.

Any adults who report suspected child sexual abuse to the authorities should then contact Harvest Fellowship’s pastor or a ruling elder. The pastor or elder will then initiate pastoral care for all parties and any disciplinary measures that may need to be taken. The pastor or elder will also inform the clerk of the Session, the church’s legal representative, and the church’s insurance company. Any media inquiries should be directed to the pastor. In the event that the pastor or a ruling elder is personally involved in the incident, either as the accused or family of the victim, another Session member will fulfill these duties.

After all the necessary reports have been made, Harvest Fellowship encourages everyone involved in the incident to use biblical wisdom when speaking about it. While Harvest Fellowship does not require a strict confidentiality, we would ask anyone who reports to use his knowledge of the incident for a godly purpose, speaking only of the incident in times and places that will help further protect children, aid investigators, or bring healing to all parties involved.

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Procedures

6. Internal Review of Procedures Following Report of Suspected Sexual Abuse

When suspected child sexual abuse is reported to the civil authorities and the suspected sexual abuse occurred on Harvest Fellowship's property or during a Harvest Fellowship event, the Session will perform an internal investigation of the incident. Without interfering with the civil authorities' investigation, the Session's review will seek to discover the following:

- a. Did adults and volunteers follow all of Harvest Fellowship's child sexual abuse prevention policies?
- b. If not, what caused the failure to follow the policy?
- c. Is there an area of our child sexual abuse prevention policies that should be altered so that such an incident will be less likely in the future?

If a report of child sexual abuse has been made, and the civil authorities do not file charges, the Session shall conduct its own investigation to determine whether the person(s) involved shall be allowed to continue working with children. Just because civil authorities do not have enough evidence to file charges, this does not mean the person is exonerated completely or is well-suited to work with children. Any powers of church discipline shall remain with the Session.

7. Boundary Violations

Harvest Fellowship takes any violation of our child sexual abuse prevention plan very seriously. Sexual abusers are rarely caught in the act of harming a child, but they're often seen breaking the rules and crossing boundaries. Every incident of boundary and rule violation does not necessarily signal that child sexual abuse has occurred. However, every incident of boundary violation requires responsible action to ensure children's safety.

Adults and student volunteers should intervene when they see anyone breaking the child sexual abuse prevention plan, ensure all children are safe, and remind the violator of appropriate behavior around children. Adults and student volunteers should also fill out a "Boundary Violation Report" in the following circumstances.

An example of a boundary violation and appropriate action to be taken looks like this: A Sunday School teacher and a student are discovered in the back room of the duplex after Sunday School is over. The person who finds this situation can remain with the adult and student. If the adult and student want to continue a private conversation, the person who found them can suggest that they move to the Pastor's or Secretary's office which will provide privacy and accountability at the same time. The above incident and ones like it will be reported to the Pastor or Session member.

Other examples include, but are not limited to:

- If an adult or student volunteer is changing a child's diaper on the floor, then remind him to change a child's diaper only in the designated area.
- If an adult or student volunteer raises his voice at a child, then direct him in how to use positive reinforcement with children.
- If an adult or student volunteer tells a joke with sexual content, then ask him not to use sexual humor around children.

If an adult or student volunteer wants to give a child a hug and the child seems uncomfortable (even in a visible area), then point out that the child seems uncomfortable and remind him that physical affection should never be forced.

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Procedures

All reports of boundary violations will be discussed at the next scheduled Session meeting in order to discover if there appears to be a pattern of behavior or violations involving a particular individual.

- 8. Hand-off of supervision between parents and volunteers is defined in the following situations:**
 - a. between Sunday Worship and Sunday School it is assumed that parents have supervision of their children until the child enters the Sunday School classroom.
 - b. Upon the scheduled completion of Sunday school it is assumed that parents resume official oversight of their children. This means that parents need to take responsibility and arrange the schedule accordingly.
- 9. Regular Evaluation of our Procedures and Code of Conduct**

Harvest Fellowship's D2D committee will review the child protection policy, procedures, and code of conduct every three years to evaluate and update as necessary. Recommended updates will be presented to the Session for approval.

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Code of Conduct

1. **Statement of Purpose**

Our goal is to protect the precious children that Jesus welcomes with open arms (Mark 10:14). Children are vulnerable and need protection. As adults it is our task to ensure that children are safe by abiding by the following code of conduct.

2. **Accountability**

When it comes to protecting children, we all ought to be accountable to one another for our actions. It is our individual and collective choices that will determine whether it is a safe environment for children. We honor the Lord when we hold each other accountable for the purpose of protecting children made in His image. Outside the care of parents, whenever children are present, two adults (preferably unrelated), two student volunteers (preferably unrelated), or an adult and a student volunteer (preferably unrelated) must be present to ensure accountability. Every ministry activity ought to be open and interruptible. All adults, whether employees or volunteers, and all student volunteers are subject to this code of conduct.

3. **Visibility**

As much as possible, ministry with children and youth ought to occur in highly visible areas. Observability is a key factor in minimizing the risk of child sexual abuse. This means utilizing open spaces, classrooms with big windows, and avoiding isolated areas.

4. **Restricting One Adult-One Child Situations**

Most sexual abuse happens in one adult-one child situations. We strive to eliminate all of these situations because they are such high risk. This does not mean there cannot be any private conversation between an adult and a child. However, these conversations need to take place in an observable area. We will strive for all activities involving children to have at least two adults (preferably unrelated) or an adult and a student volunteer (preferably unrelated) supervising at all times.

5. **Appropriate and Inappropriate Touch**

By God's design, appropriate touch is an important way for us to understand that we are loved.

Appropriate touch is observable by other adults. A hug in the context of a group is very different from a hug behind closed doors. Touch should be welcomed by the child. Any resistance by the child should be immediately respected. Because healthy, caring touch is valuable to children but unhealthy touch is abusive, the following guidelines apply:

- Touch shall be open rather than secretive.
- Touch should show care for the child rather than meet a need in the adult.
- Touch should be age- and developmentally appropriate.
- Touch should normally be initiated by the child rather than the adult.
- Touch should always communicate respect for the child.
- Touch should immediately cease if the child is in any way uncomfortable.

Adults and other youth or children should not hit, slap, pinch, push, hold against their will, or otherwise assault children.

The following signs of affection are generally appropriate within the guidelines above:

- Verbal praise
- Side hugs and shoulder to shoulder hugs
- High fives and fist bumps
- Pats on the shoulder, back, or head (when culturally appropriate)

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Code of Conduct

For smaller children, the following are generally appropriate with other adults around and within the guidelines above:

- Touching hands, shoulders, and arms
- Hugs
- Holding them when others are present

The following behaviors between employees or volunteers and children are inappropriate, or they may at least be perceived as inappropriate. Please refrain from:

- Touching buttocks, chests, genital areas, or thighs
- Full body hugs
- Kissing
- Tickling
- Showing affection in isolated areas or when alone with a child
- Sleeping in bed with a child
- Inappropriate comments that relate to physique or body development
- Flirtatious or seductive looks
- Showing sexually suggestive content or playing sexually suggestive games
- Any form of affection that is unwanted by the child
- Any behavior that could be interpreted as sexual in nature
- Removing clothing, including removing shirts to play sports.

Adults shall monitor each other, youth, and older children in the area of physical contact, helping each other follow these guidelines and pointing out anything that could be misinterpreted.

6. **Appropriate and Inappropriate Speech**

Words are a wonderful way to build one another up. Words can give encouragement and impart grace to the hearer (Ephesians 4:29). We must speak words that give life, such as praise, positive reinforcement, and speaking the truth in love. At the same time we must avoid words that harm. We will all commit to refrain from inappropriate verbal interaction such as telling off-color or sexual jokes, making sexually suggestive comments, telling inappropriate secrets, or inappropriately discussing sexual encounters or desires with children.

Adults shall avoid favoring or showing preferential treatment to particular children or youth.

7. **Technology**

Any employee or volunteer working with children or youth is responsible to ensure that any technology is used appropriately. We must monitor any use of phones, the internet, TV, and movies when children are in our care. Technology can quickly be turned from a proper use into something that is used for exploitation. All pornography and any other sexually explicit or suggestive content are strictly prohibited. Adults should refrain from developing a relationship with a child or youth primarily over electronic media (text, IM, etc.), since this is not open and observable. Any sexual conversation between an adult and a child over electronic media is abusive and is strictly prohibited.

8. **Rules Specific to Bathroom Use**

No adult should take a child into the bathroom alone. Elementary children should be sent to the bathroom in groups of at least two or three. If a child is potty training, an adult should ensure the bathroom is safe before allowing such a small child to enter alone. Encourage the child to go on his own. If the child needs assistance, involve another adult to ensure there is no one adult-one child

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Code of Conduct

situation. When assisting, allow for accountability while respecting the privacy of the child as much as possible.

9. Rules Specific to the Nursery

Small children are extremely vulnerable. We must ensure there is good visibility and adequate staff and volunteers to supervise the nursery. When changing diapers, inform another nursery worker, and change the diaper quickly and with respect for the child. Diapers should only be changed in designated areas where we can maintain the boundaries of openness and observability.

10. Supervision

Regular supervision helps reduce risk. Every activity is interruptible and we are all accountable to one another. Program supervisors shall frequently and randomly stop in to observe the nursery, classrooms, and other areas where children and adults are together. Parental supervision is also necessary on the playground to prevent peer-to-peer sexual abuse.

11. Parental Involvement

Parents are responsible for knowing where their children are at all times. We encourage parents to drop by unannounced to observe any activity in which their child is participating. Along with other adults, parents have a key role to play in keeping their children safe. The involvement of watchful parents, who make unannounced visits, leads to a safer environment for all children. Parents are encouraged to be educated in our procedures and code of conduct and help with their enforcement.

12. Reporting Boundary Violations

For the safety of all children in our care, we are all responsible to help ensure the boundaries set forth in this code of conduct are followed. The Bible commends those who have a teachable spirit and are open to correction (Proverbs 9:8; 13:18). Therefore, we must all pledge to remind each other if a boundary is being crossed. Every boundary violation requires responsible action from adults. Our expectation is that you will intervene when a boundary is crossed. Working with children is a huge privilege and responsibility because our children are so valuable. *Those who are unwilling to guard proper boundaries cannot work with our children.* When a boundary is crossed, kindly but firmly remind the person of the boundary and make sure the situation is safe. It might also be appropriate to fill out a *Boundary Violation Report* and submit it to the church office. All reports will be kept confidential. Cases where it would be appropriate would include but not be limited to: repeat boundary violations, an attitude of resistance to boundaries, and an especially dangerous boundary violation (such as an adult being all alone with a child in an isolated area). These can be difficult decisions, but you must follow your conscience and our procedures. If something is not right it is better to speak to someone about it. Sexual abusers are rarely caught in the act of abuse, but they are often caught crossing boundaries. We must see the signs and intervene.

13. Reporting Child Sexual Abuse

When anyone has reason to suspect or has knowledge of child sexual abuse within the scope of the church's ministry, he must report it to the civil authorities and inform the pastor or a ruling elder. If the pastor or elder is involved in the incident, report to another Session member. You will then need to fill out a Knowledge of Suspected Sexual Abuse form and submit it to the church office in a sealed envelope.

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Forms

Application to Work/Volunteer with Children/Youth
Harvest Fellowship, 9905, H.G. Truman Rd, Lusby, MD 20657

Part 1 – Personal Profile

Full Name _____

Present Address _____

Home telephone _____ Work Phone _____

Cell Phone _____ Best time to reach you _____

Any other names you are known as _____

How old are you? _____

Do you have a current Driving License? _____ If yes, please list the number (State) _____

Part 2 – Ministry History and Profile

Position you are applying for _____

When (month/year) did you begin attending Harvest Fellowship? _____

What church did you attend previously? _____

Are you a Christian Yes No Not Sure

If you are not a member of Harvest Fellowship, please briefly summarize how you came to faith in Christ and describe the present condition of your spiritual life

Describe any other ministries you have been or currently involved in

Why do you want to become involved in this ministry?

(over)

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Forms

Part 3 – Personal References and History

Please provide three personal character references. If you have previous ministry experience, include references from those ministries or churches.

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Have you ever been accused (rightly or wrongly) of child abuse or neglect? []Yes []No

Have you ever been arrested or convicted for any criminal act other than a traffic violation?

[]Yes []No

If “yes,” please explain

Were you ever a victim of child abuse or molestation as a minor? []Yes []No

If selected for a position, would you agree to be fingerprinted? []Yes []No

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Forms

I affirm that the above statements are true, and I authorize Harvest Fellowship, 9905, H.G. Trueman Rd, Lusby, MD 20657 or its representatives to verify the information. Harvest Fellowship may contact my references and appropriate government and law enforcement agencies. *I understand that Harvest Fellowship will perform a national criminal background check (including sexual abuse) if necessary.*

Signature _____ Date _____

Social Security Number _____ Date of Birth _____

Driver's License Number (and state if not MD) _____

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Forms

Child Protection Consent Form

I acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of Harvest Fellowship's Child Protection Policy, Child Protection Procedures, and Code of Conduct. I understand these documents and agree to abide by them. Furthermore, I agree to hold others accountable to follow them.

Signature

Date

Print Name

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Forms

Personal Interview Record

Date: _____

Interviewee: _____

Interviewer: _____

Interview questions should include but not be limited to:

Tell us about how you become a Christian?

What is your relationship like with God right now?

What motivates you when you think about working with children?

In what capacities have you worked with children before?

Where do you see your strengths and weaknesses in working with children?

Have you read our child protection documents? What do you think about them? Are you willing to submit to their requirements and help others follow them?

If you discovered a child alone with another adult in an isolated area, what would you do?

If you overheard another adult telling a sexual joke what would you do?

Additional Comments (use the back if needed):

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Forms

Record of Reference Check

Reference record for (adult or student volunteer's name): _____

References checked by: _____

Reference (circle) 1 2 3 4:

Reference Name: _____

Date: _____

Method of communication: _____

Reference questions should include but not be limited to:

What is your relationship with _____?

How long have you known _____?

In what capacity have you seen _____ working with children (or students)?

How would you describe _____ ability to relate to children (or students)?

What do you think _____ strength are in working with children?

What are areas where _____ could improve as he/she interacts with children?

When _____ interacted with children, did he/she know and respect the boundaries (or policies) for your organization (family, etc.) around children? If not, please explain.

Do you know of any characteristics that would negatively affect _____ ability to work with children?

Would you recommend that _____ work with children in our organization?

Additional Questions/Comments:

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Forms

Knowledge of Suspected Child Abuse

Name of staff(s) or volunteer(s) observing or receiving disclosure of child sexual abuse: _____

Victim's Name and Age: _____

Date/place of incident: _____

Name of person accused of abuse: _____

Relationship of accused to victim (paid staff, volunteer, family member, other): _____

Summary of Incident (use the back of this sheet if you need more space):

Date/Time civil authorities were notified: _____

Person who called the civil authorities: _____

Church officers notified (usually Senior Pastor): _____

Date/Time of notification: _____

Date/Time child's parent/guardian was notified: _____

Person who contacted family: _____

Family member contacted: _____

Summary of conversation:

Other action taken (e.g. contacting Child Advocacy Group):

Harvest Fellowship Child Protection Forms

Boundary Violation Report

Any adult or student volunteer who observes any other adult or student volunteer in an isolated area with a child or observes any other adult or student volunteer repeatedly violating boundaries, should use this form to create a record of the incident. Turn this form into the church administrative assistant in a sealed envelope. Adult or student volunteer involved in the incident:

Child/children involved in the incident: _____

Location(s) of boundary violation(s): _____

Date(s) of boundary violation(s): _____

Circumstances of the violation(s). Give as much detail as you can remember (use the back of this sheet if you need more space):

Any actions taken in response to boundary violation(s):

Name

Date