

**Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church
Child and Youth Protection Policy
January 2018**

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Dear Members and Friends of Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church,

Child abuse is a growing moral and legal problem in the United States. Sadly, this is even true in churches. In fact, churches are often environments that attract predators because too few policies, if any at all, are in place to offer reasonable protection to our children and youth.

In light of this, the 42nd General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America approved a resolution condemning child abuse and calling on all churches to review and revise their policies regarding child and sexual abuse. We work hard to continually review and improve to keep our practices regarding child safety and protection current. Our Child Protection Policies affect nearly every ministry that addresses the outreach and discipleship needs of our children and youth (Sunday School, Nursery, Youth and Family Group, and VBS). Some of the safeguards stated in these policies have been practiced at RMPC for years, while other practices were implemented more recently. As they are updated they will require adjustment to our schedules, routines, and body life. Even if the occasional updates are difficult at first to implement and adjust to, we believe that they are important and worth the inconvenience that they may cause us as a congregation.

Developing these sorts of policies not only protects RMPC and our volunteers against accusation and litigation, but more importantly, the consistent application of these policies go a long way to protect our children against potentially harmful situations and actual abuse.

We have developed a child prevention plan that includes background checks for volunteers, refined check-in systems for our nursery and children's programs, and systems for reporting and dealing with actual incidents of abuse.

Some of you may find it difficult to talk about child abuse, thinking it couldn't happen here or be committed by someone you know. If you have questions about our policies, you can contact any of the ministry staff at the church office (520-327-2390). We would be happy to discuss these things with you.

We urge you to support our plans for protecting our children and the church from possible allegations or actual incidents of child abuse. We have been entrusted as a covenant community with an incredible task to protect and nurture these children made in the image of God and dearly loved by Him.

In Christ,

Phil Kruis
Sr. Pastor, Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church

CHAPTER 2 – DEFINITION OF TERMS

Child – any individual under the age of 18

Youth – those individuals who fall under the purview of RMPC’s Youth and Family Ministry, beginning in 6th grade and continuing until 18 years of age

Volunteer – any individual who provides services for Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church without compensation in the form of salary, wages, or other benefits (e.g., youth leaders, Sunday school teachers, nursery workers, etc.)

Staff – any individual who provides services for Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church and receives compensation in the form of salary, wages, and/or other benefits, either part- or full-time

Child Abuse – the injury of a child by an adult or older child (see “Age Factors”) that is not actively accidental, including physical, mental/emotional, and sexual abuse

Child Physical Abuse – the non-accidental bodily injury of a child through physical contact or mistreatment (including neglect), including both acute incident and patterns of behavior over time, which may include unjustifiable or severe corporal punishment

Child Sexual Abuse – the involvement of a child in any form of sexual contact or exploitation in which the minor is being used for the stimulation of the perpetrator (adult or older child; see “Age Factors”) in ways which the child does not fully comprehend, is unable to give full informed consent to, for which the child is not developmentally prepared, or which violates the laws and/or taboos of society, often resulting from an inequality in and abuse of a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power

This may include, but is not limited to:

Verbal – remarks which include sexual comments or threats (suggestive or explicit), innuendos, inappropriate comments about one’s body or appearance, solicitation, inappropriate or obscene contact via phone, text, print, or online (including social media), inappropriately affectionate comments, or any communication intended to arouse or stimulate

Visual – indecent exposure or exhibitionism, showing or taking suggestive pictures, voyeurism, exposure to erotic or pornographic materials, or exposure to real or simulated sexual activity such as (but not limited to) masturbation or intercourse

Physical – fondling or petting (whether touch includes sexual areas/genitals or not), sexual touching of intimate areas (whether clothed or unclothed),

masturbation of either party, holding/inappropriate hugging of a sexual and/or intimate nature, kissing for the purpose of sexual gratification, stimulation of intimate areas including mouth, genitals, anus, or breasts, intercourse including penetration or attempted penetration by penis, fingers, or any other body part or object of mouth, anus, or vagina, or actions revealing intention of the same (such as attempted rape)

Child Mental/Emotional Abuse – any language or action directed towards a child by an adult or older child (see “Age Factors”) that is intended to cause emotional anxiety, pain, manipulation, or severe emotional disturbance that results in impairment to the child’s growth, development, or psychological functioning

This may include, but is not limited to:

Acts of commission – action or language used which causes or is intended to cause/has a high probability of causing harm to a child’s physical, mental, spiritual, moral, or social health and development, such as restriction of movement through physical means, restraints, or imprisonment, belittling, denigrating, scapegoating, threatening, scaring, humiliating, blaming, or discriminating

Acts of omission – patterns of failure to provide a developmentally appropriate and supportive environment including healthy adult interaction and attachment and parental affection, so that a child can develop a stable and full range of emotional and social competencies commensurate with their personal potentials and in the context of the societal norms in which the child dwells

Neglect – an act of omission in which over time the primary caregiver(s) of a child fail to provide for the development of that child holistically – health and nutrition, education, emotional development and appropriate affection, shelter, safe living conditions, and reasonable supervision/protection from harm, within the context of the resources reasonably available to the family or caregiver(s), creating an environment of high probability of causing harm to a child’s physical, mental, spiritual, moral, or social health and development

Age Factors – because child abuse is defined as actions against an individual under 18 years old (because of the obvious exploitation by the offender of a difference in power, authority, and/or responsibility between them and the child), circumstances of potential abuse where both the offender and victim are legally children must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Factors to be used in this consideration include: a difference in 2 years between the offender and victim, differences in responsibility, trust, development, power, awareness, and understanding, and the use of implied or verbal threats. Sexual abuse between minors is typically evaluated as

behavior occurring without consent or understanding by one party, without equality, or as a result of coercion.

Special Note concerning Statutory Rape/Sexual Abuse – “statutory rape” is commonly defined as sexual contact between an adult age 18 or over and a minor under the age of 18 regardless of the consent of both parties. Any sexual contact between an adult serving in a staff/volunteer capacity and a minor at Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church shall be grounds for immediate removal and church discipline.

CHAPTER 3: NEW VOLUNTEER APPLICATION PROCESS

Establishing a comprehensive application process for volunteers at Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church is in service of two goals:

1. **Organizational Safety and Accountability** – A comprehensive application process for volunteers who will work with individuals under 18 firstly serves to protect our children and community—through federal and state background checks, checking of references, and individual interviews—from individuals who would seek to exploit our love of children and gain access to minors. Further, these checks help ensure, should an incident occur, that we have leveraged our best efforts to vet all possible risks to our community, and have thus legally protected ourselves from litigation as an act of stewardship of the resources God has entrusted to us.
2. **Regular Training** – Volunteers benefit from regular training to be reminded of specific competencies such as awareness of safety and church policy.

The process for all future volunteers interacting in any capacity with individuals under the age of 18 at Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church will be as follows:

1. New applicants must normally have been members or regular attendees of RMPC for a period of at least 6 months, with “regular attendees” having discussed membership with the session of RMPC. This time period may be shortened or eliminated only by permission of the session of RMPC on a case-by-case basis, an act which must be documented and placed in that applicant’s personal file (see below).
2. All prospective volunteers and staff will fill out the Volunteer Application Form (see Appendix B) and a Background Check Release Form. Teen volunteers (age 17 and under) will be selected and screened by the responsible staff member and must complete a Teen Volunteer Application Form (see Appendix C). Teen volunteers may also be required to attend ministry training.
3. An approved director of an affected specialized ministry (Children’s Ministry, Nursery, Youth and Families), will call each of these references to verify the individual’s character, any experience noted, and reliability for the ministry.
4. The pastor or approved director reserves the right to meet with the individual for an interview to discuss the individual’s ability to serve, preferred areas of service, past history, and any concerns. At this meeting screening questions will also be asked to root out individuals seeking to work with children for sinful or unhealthy reasons.
5. If the application and reference processes are successful, a background check will be procured. This report will be kept, along with the applicant’s application, as well as any interview notes or addendums added during the reference process, in a secure file cabinet located in the church office, as long as the individual is in service at RMPC and for a period of 10 years following.
6. All volunteers working with children will be required to complete child protection training before they can work with children. This training must be retaken every three years or as policies change.

CHAPTER 4: GENERAL DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES

Procedures for Discipline

1. Classroom rules and expectations should be clearly and regularly communicated to all students, especially when introducing children to new experiences. Do not assume a child knows what is expected of him/her.
2. If a child is behaving inappropriately, this first offense should be dealt with in a positive manner if possible (e.g., “We use blocks for building”), such as directing a child to a new activity. It is permissible to state expected behaviors (e.g., “We do not throw blocks”) and/or state consequences (e.g., “If you throw blocks again, you will have to sit by yourself for a time”). Care will be given to have these conversations without publically shaming the child.
3. If behavior continues, the child may be separated from other children to sit alone quietly, or to work alone on the project at hand, for a brief time. Volunteers may use this time to speak to the child, informing him/her of his offense, expected behaviors, and length of time he/she will be sitting alone (do not exceed this length).
4. If this is not effective in altering the child’s behavior, the child may be taken to his/her parents or guardians. The teacher accompanying the child, or the director of that ministry, should discuss the situation with the child’s parents/guardians.
5. Misbehavior at an offsite location may result in a parent or other designated guardian having to come pick up the child. If a child or youth is sent home it will be at the parents’ expense.

Additional Policies

1. Staff or volunteers may never strike a child of any age on their person, even on the hand, thigh, or buttocks (commonly known as “swatting” or “spanking”) as part of a disciplinary action. Other prohibited physical disciplines include (but are not limited to): shaking, grabbing, or leading a child by any part of their body or clothing in a forceful manner.
2. Any discipline which results in psychological or emotional damage is also prohibited. This includes mockery, name-calling, or public shaming. A staff or volunteer may not require a child to undertake any action which would be shaming or publically humiliating for the purpose of discipline.
3. Physical restraint of a child may only be used to prevent a child from injuring themselves or others and should be immediately documented in an Incident Report Form (see Appendix E) by the responsible volunteer or staff person and filed in a secure file cabinet located in the church office. Such incidents must also be reported to the Clerk of Session.
4. As a staff member or volunteer is a representative of Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church when fulfilling their role in an official capacity (e.g., when working in the nursery, teaching Sunday School, chaperoning youth ministry activities, etc.), this individual must abide by the above disciplinary policies even when applying them to children normally

under that individual's personal disciplinary discretion, such as that individual's own children, or the children of a relative or close friend with whom the worker normally exercises disciplinary rights.

CHAPTER 5 – GENERAL AND MINISTRY-SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

As children develop physically, emotionally, intellectually, socially, and spiritually, they are ministered to by the church both in inter-generational contexts (worship services, fellowship meals, small groups) and in peer groups (such as nursery, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and Youth and Family Night). Because of the differences in how Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church ministers to each of these groups, the execution of principles to prevent child abuse or endangerment may differ according to ministry context. Nonetheless, the principles themselves remain constant:

- While a minor is engaged in any RMPC peer-specific ministry that takes them away from the care and authority of their parent(s) or guardian(s), they are under the specific care and protection of the church. Thus, ministries must be intentional in marking this transfer of care in order to know the exact number and names of the children in their care.
- Ministries should keep accurate records of the emergency contact information and relevant medical information (allergies, emergency medical procedures) of those under their care.
- Normally, “one-on-one” adult and minor situations should be avoided; exceptions will be noted as well as recommendations for avoiding and handling them.
- The possession, distribution, consumption, or use of or being under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol while leading or participating in a RMPC function for children or youth is strictly prohibited.

SECTION ONE – NURSERY

The nursery is made up of three sections: an infant-sleeper and breastfeeding room, a main nursery, and a third toddler room. The policies below apply any time nursery care is offered.

INFANT-SLEEPER/BREASTFEEDING ROOM

The infant-sleeper/breastfeeding room is open during all RMPC services and equipped for new mothers to breastfeed comfortably. At the same time, it is also available for sleeping infants. Families using this room are responsible for the care of their children.

MAIN NURSERY

There are three areas of care regarding child safety in the main nursery:

1. Check-In

Children are to be admitted to the nursery such that the following pieces of information are collected:

- The child’s identity (name & gender)

- The identity of the adult dropping the child off and picking the child up
- Any medical conditions or allergies
- Any accompanying bags or cups
- Any special information regarding care for the child
- Contact information for the parent/guardian while at RMPC. For Sunday school, the class being attended by the parent must be noted.

Admission to the nursery will be accomplished through a nursery tagging system. Each regularly-attending child in the nursery will have an identification tag. On the front and back of this tag, a nursery worker will find the child's number. This tag will be clipped on the child. Should the child's parent/guardian be required during the service, the child's number will be flashed on the display in the sanctuary. In addition, a name tag with first name will be placed on visitor's child's back.

The parent or guardian dropping the child off at the nursery will receive the accompanying tag, and this tag must be returned to pick up the child. Special circumstances such as a lost tag or emergencies where a different family member must pick up the child without transferring the tag must be verified by either the nursery director or a pastor.

2. Staffing the Nursery

As RMPC requires a "two adult" policy for staffing any children's activity, this means a nursery with 1-6 children requires two approved volunteer nursery workers. Additional children admitted to the nursery will require additional nursery workers.

SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING YOUTH VOLUNTEERS: RMPC has a long tradition of volunteers age 10-17 assisting in its children's ministries. Current policy regulations continue to encourage this with the following conditions:

- Youth ages 10-12 may work in the nursery if working with one of their parents
- Youth may NOT serve in the nursery during the Discipleship Hour (Sunday School)
- Youth may NOT serve as one of the two required adult volunteers in the room (1-6 children) but may serve to expand beyond this number
- Youth may NOT serve in the nursery more than once per month

3. Nursery Staff Behaviors

Individuals serving in the nursery must abide by the following policies:

- Only ADULT FEMALE nursery volunteers may change diapers or accompany children to private bathrooms. Because of this, at least one of the two adult nursery workers each week must be female. This bathroom door should remain open/cracked at all times when inside with a child.

- Female volunteers will change an infant's diaper when required, and replace it with a provided disposable diaper, unless the volunteer has had prior communication and training with the parent/guardian and is comfortable replacing a cloth diaper. RMPC's nursery ministry is not required to provide cloth-diaper trained volunteers.
- All nursery volunteers must abide by RMPC disciplinary policy as stated in chapter 5.
- Nursery workers may not leave unattended with a child to "walk and soothe" him/her.

TODDLER ROOM

Should the number of infants and toddlers exceed the recommended capacity of the main nursery; the second overflow room will be used. This will require at least 4 adults to be present during that nursery session (two per room) in addition to any youth volunteers available.

SECTION TWO – CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Children's SS policy involves three areas: check-in, classroom procedures, and check-out.

CHECK-IN

Children attending Sunday School will check in with their teachers at their Sunday school classroom on Sunday mornings beginning at 9:20 AM. All visiting parents/guardians dropping off children must sign in their children. From this moment, the child is the responsibility of RMPC Sunday School staff. The child must remain in the designated children's area and will be monitored by Sunday School personnel. The parent/guardian dropping off the child is assumed to be the individual picking the child up from Sunday School. They may designate another individual to do so as well, but that person will be required to show identification if he/she is unknown to the classroom teachers.

Sign-in procedures will also include the collection of important information including (but not limited to): student allergies or relevant medical conditions, family situation or other necessary pastoral matters, behavioral issues, etc. Once this information is on file, the child will no longer be considered a visitor and weekly sign-in is no longer necessary.

These sign-in sheets will be kept on the check-in counter and accessible. Classroom teachers will check-in additional students arriving late in their classrooms. These class rolls will also serve as safety measures in the event of an emergency, such as an evacuation or lock-down procedure.

CLASSROOM PROCEDURES

RMPC children's Sunday School operates on a 'two-adult' rule, as well as a ratio of 8:1 (8 students for each adult). Thus, each classroom must have two adults for 1-16 children, and an additional adult for 17-24 children, etc. This third adult will commonly be the Director of Children's Ministries, who will be available in such circumstances. These ratios are based on the

2013 recommendations for ages 5+ by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, a national accreditation agency.

Teachers will maintain accurate class roles and student information, taking note of special circumstances such as allergies (when having snack/refreshments or doing crafts) or special pick-up information.

Teachers taking students to the restroom (when age-appropriate) will escort the child to the restroom, wait outside for the child, and then escort the child back to the classroom. In situations where the child may need assistance, only female teaching staff may enter the bathroom with female children and male staff with male children.

If at any time there is only one adult in the room (as when one teacher takes students to the bathroom), the remaining adult will leave the door to the classroom propped open. If one adult will be gone for an extended period of time, the remaining adult will ask the Director of Children's Ministries to substitute themselves or another adult, preferably a trained volunteer, for the remainder of the SS hour.

Teachers will abide by RMPC disciplinary procedures (see chapter 5). Teachers may refer specific disciplinary problems to the Director of Children's Ministries instead of directly involving parents/guardians. The Director will then have the discretion of involving the parents.

CHECK OUT

The parent or guardian (or other designated individual, such as an older sibling with parental permission) must come and pick up each student from their specific classroom. In the event of a student being left behind, the teacher or Sunday School Director will wait with the remaining student(s) in the children's area, or in the event of a single student, will escort the student to their parents. No child will be released without an accompanying individual.

SECTION THREE – Children's Worship (CW)

RMPC's CW ministry policies involve check-in/out procedures and teaching principles:

CHECK-IN/OUT

Following dismissal from the sanctuary, visiting parents/guardians (similar to the RMPC Children's SS policy) will check-in each child at the classroom manned by CW workers. The parent/guardian that drops the child off is the only individual who may pick up the child.

TEACHING PRINCIPLES

Any closed classroom-teaching situation will require two adults.

Teachers taking students to the restroom (when age-appropriate) will escort the child to the restroom, wait outside for the child, and then escort the child back to the classroom. In situations where the child may need assistance, only female teaching staff may enter the bathroom with female children and male staff with male children unless a parent or guardian has given their written permission.

Policies for RMPC Vacation Bible School (VBS) will reflect policies for RMPC Nursery and CW, including check-in and teacher ratios.

SECTION FOUR – YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY

Youth leaders will often find themselves with the responsibility to provide spiritual and emotional counsel for students, often involving private and/or sensitive situations. Therefore, youth leaders must operate within stipulated boundaries:

- All youth and family events and meetings will abide by RMPC’s two-adult policy.
- It is RMPC’s policy that no staff or volunteer youth leader may engage in a romantic relationship with a member of the Youth and Family Ministry at RMPC.
- A single youth leader may interact with multiple students in an area with a closed door as long as that classroom has a window. Groups of 5+ may interact in areas with limited access/viewing. A leader needing to check on a student in a private area such as a bathroom should take with them either another student or leader.
- One-on-one counseling:
 - A single youth leader may meet for “one-on-one” counseling with a student only in two situations: The counseling may take place in an environment of accountability where the conversation can be viewed (though not heard), such as the church office in view of church office staff behind a door with a window, OR the counseling may take place in a public area such as a restaurant or crowded park (but transporting youth to such a location must follow the guidelines in Section 5 below).
 - Youth leaders should also exhibit discretion regarding the time spent in one-on-one counseling with any student, especially those of the opposite gender, so as to not encourage inappropriate emotional relationships. The Youth and Family Pastor reserves the right to ask any youth leader to discontinue one-on-one counseling with students should a relationship of this type arise.
 - A youth leader providing one-on-one counsel should refrain from speaking about sexual matters with individuals of the opposite sex, and should exhibit pastoral discretion regarding sharing details of their own personal lives (such as past sins or struggles). Leaders of the same gender should be referred to when dealing with issues of inappropriate clothing (such as issues with sleepwear or swimwear).
 - All counseling situations should be understood to operate under the conditions of confidentiality unless the counselee reveals intent to harm him or herself or another person. Should a counselee reveal such intent, the parents of the youth

must be immediately notified, along with the Youth and Family Pastor and any appropriate civil authorities.

- It is RMPC's policy that when a minor turns 18 and wants to volunteer in the Youth and Family or Children's ministry, he or she will need to apply as an adult.

SECTION FIVE – TRANSPORTATION AND EVENTS

TRANSPORTATION

Staff members of RMPC are not allowed to transport individual students of any gender unless the parents have granted written permission. However, emergencies may arise requiring this transportation. In such a rare event, the staff member is required to have their spouse or an elder on the phone for the duration of the transportation.

Volunteer workers for RMPC are allowed to transport students with the following guidelines:

- The worker must have a valid driver's license and insurance.
- Everyone in the vehicle must use a seat belt. "Doubling up" in one seat is not permitted.
- Multiple students may be transported at one time without parental written permission. A single non-staff youth leader is not allowed to transport a single student without the parents' written permission.
- However, this is discouraged. It is recommended that non-staff leaders make every attempt to not transport a single student alone:
 - Take multiple students home, finishing with sibling groups last.
 - Take another adult with you.
 - Take your own children with you.

EVENTS

Ministries working with minors often involve events that may include situations such as staying overnight or meeting off-site.

OVERNIGHT

Individuals of opposite sexes may not sleep in the same room unless it is a large-room situation where the two genders are divided and supervised by at least two adults.

An adult may never be permitted to sleep in the same room or tent with only one or two children without observing the two-adult rule, unless the adult is the parent of that child.

At facilities with non-private bathing situations (e.g., multiple showers separated by curtains, as in locker rooms, as opposed to private bathrooms with locking doors), adults may not bathe at the same time as students.

MEETING OFF-SITE

Some off-site ministry events may involve permission slips and will always operate under the disciplinary and transportation policies outlined above. Ministries undertaking such activities must have a record of all students under their care for the entirety of the event.

CHAPTER 6 – INCIDENT REPORTING AND COMMUNICATION

INCIDENT REPORTING POLICY

Arizona Revised Statute 13-3620 states:

“Any person who reasonably believes that a minor is or has been the victim of physical injury, abuse, child abuse, a reportable offense or neglect that appears to have been inflicted on the minor by other than accidental means or that is not explained by the available medical history as being accidental in nature or who reasonably believes there has been a denial or deprivation of necessary medical treatment or surgical care or nourishment with the intent to cause or allow the death of an infant who is protected under section 36-2281 shall immediately report or cause reports to be made of this information to a peace officer or to the department of child safety, except if the report concerns a person who does not have care, custody or control of the minor, the report shall be made to a peace officer only.”

Important Phone Numbers:

- Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS): (888) 767-2445
- Tucson Police Department (non-emergency reporting): (520) 791-4444
- Pima County Sheriff’s Department (non-emergency reporting): (520) 351-4900

Before any other church procedure is followed, suspected abuse should be reported. While all volunteers will be trained in the recognition of abuse in minors, additional guidelines are to be found in Appendix F of this policy. Further, any volunteer (or church member) may consult with a director of a RMPC ministry to minors or the Youth and Family Pastor. It should be noted that consulting with one of these individuals does not negate the requirement to report; both individuals will thus report the incident.

Volunteers are asked to also follow these procedures:

1. While not legally required, all volunteers are asked to report suspected abuse (after reporting it to the proper officials) to the Youth and Family Pastor or Director of Children’s Ministries within 24 hours, especially if the report involves abuse suspected to be perpetrated by a RMPC volunteer or staff member. Volunteers are asked to use the Incident Report Form (see Appendix E) to make this report. All forms collected, regardless of truth, will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the RMPC office.
2. Additional efforts on the part of the reporter to investigate or verify the abuse should not be undertaken.
3. The Youth and Family Pastor, upon further counsel with the session of RMPC, will determine whether the reported abuse should also be directly referred to the authorities by the church.
4. The Youth and Family Pastor will report the alleged abuse to the child’s parent or guardian (if this individual is not the suspected abuser).

IF THERE IS AN INCIDENT:

In the unfortunate discovery of an alleged incident involving abuse at RMPC, a Crisis Management Team will be formed, whose membership includes:

- The Youth and Family Pastor or Senior Pastor (but not both)
- The director of the ministry involved (if any)
- Two Ruling Elders
- An individual with legal experience

The team is required to have at least one female member, as well as one member who is a current parent of a minor (these requirements may require the addition of a 6th member).

This committee will immediately elect a non-pastoral spokesperson (preferably a female) whose job will be to speak for the church to media outlets and to be the information point person for church members. The non-pastoral designation serves to free pastoral staff to minister to the church in a time of great pain and confusion. It is also helpful because pastoral staff are more likely to be called as witnesses in a criminal investigation. A secretary to retain documentation and minutes for the team should also be chosen.

This team works as a commission with the following immediate actions:

1. The accused individual (if any) is to be removed from any contact with minors as a representative of RMPC. By law, the alleged abuser does not have the immediate right to know his/her accuser, and details of the incident should not be given.

Should DCS or Arizona law enforcement officials act upon a suspected report:

2. Contact RMPC's church insurance provider, Guide One (877-448-4331), and alert them to the possibility of abuse at RMPC.
3. Determine competent legal counsel for RMPC, and prepare documentation (including payment, contact information, etc.) should the need arise (this step may be undertaken whether or not action is immediately taken by authorities).

While RMPC pastoral staff should serve the family of the abused, a 'church investigation' should not take place at this time in terms of interviewing those involved, as church leadership is not qualified to undertake a forensic or legal investigation. Doing so may qualify as impeding an investigation in some circumstances.

The Crisis Management Team should then:

4. Work with RMPC pastoral staff and session to determine when and how information is given to church membership, as well as in wording and delivering statements to the media as needed. At some point, legal counsel may take over this role.

5. Investigate only the details of RMPC policy, such as whether certain procedures were violated or not, including the collection of the individual's volunteer application and interview.
6. Determine what RMPC should learn from the experience, including whether policy documents or procedures should be changed (later referring such changes to RMPC's session), environmental factors should be altered, etc.

The Crisis Management Team will eventually also serve in a consulting role with RMPC's session in discussions of removal of church leadership and/or employment, as well as separate discussions of church discipline per the Presbyterian Church in America's Book of Church Order (BCO).

Whether or not investigations by the authorities result in sufficient corroboration of the allegation of abuse to bring charges against the accused, the violation of RMPC policy may be sufficient to terminate the individual's employment or volunteer status at RMPC—actions that should be reviewed by the session in corroboration with the Crisis Management Team.

Pastoral staff should act to pair victims and their families with sufficient long-term counseling that specializes in the trauma of child abuse. RMPC's session may choose to subsidize this counseling.

In the event of an investigation revealing that the alleged abuse was false, without sufficient violation of RMPC policy, the Crisis Management Team should work with RMPC's session and pastoral staff in seeking restoration among involved parties and healing within the church body at large.

APPENDIX A – RESOLUTION BEFORE 42nd GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Originally authored by Rev. Mike Sloan, Associate Pastor of Old Peachtree Presbyterian Church in Duluth, GA, of Georgia Foothills Presbytery, Overture 6 at 42nd General Assembly of the PCA.

A Statement on Child Protection in the PCA

WHEREAS our Lord Jesus demonstrated his righteous anger at his own disciples, rebuking those who would do anything to prevent children from coming unto him, saying “to such belongs the Kingdom of God,” (Mark 10:14) and condemning those who would harm children, saying “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.” (Matthew 18:6); and

WHEREAS an epidemic of child sexual abuse exists in our culture, with the vast majority of such children being harmed by someone they know and trust, wounding children physically, emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually with lifelong ripple effects; and

WHEREAS the silence of the church – when we fail to appropriately address “rape, incest, sodomy and all unnatural lusts” (WLC 139) by not reporting disclosures of child sexual abuse, or not caring for those who disclose child sexual abuse, or not proactively taking steps to prevent child sexual abuse – is a fundamental failure of servant leadership, rendering the church complicit and culpable before the Lord, driving people away from the safety, healing and hope of Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS Scripture warns leaders against the “careless exposing, or leaving [those in their care] to wrong, temptation, and danger” (WLC 130), and every jurisdiction acknowledges that child sexual abuse is a serious felony and has its own mandated reporting laws; THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED that we exhort all church leaders to become informed and to take an active stance toward preventing child sexual abuse in the church by screening staff and volunteers, training them in child protection, and actively maintaining child protection policies pertaining to our obligations to love our children and protect their rightful interests as God’s image-bearers from the devastating actions of abusers (Matthew 18:5-6; WLC 129-130); and be it further

RESOLVED that we remind all churches that the heinous crime of child sexual abuse must be reported to duly appointed, God-ordained civil authorities, and that we must cooperate with those authorities as they “bear the sword” to punish those who do evil “in such an effectual manner as that no person be suffered...to offer any indignity, violence, abuse, or injury to any other person whatsoever” (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-14; WCF 23.3); and be it further

RESOLVED that we urge all church leaders to use their influence for the protection of children, by any and all godly means, including preaching and teaching against the heinous sin of child sexual abuse, warning anyone with knowledge of these sins to “take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them” (Ephesians 5:11), and by supporting victims who often suffer in silence and shame without the vocal and compassionate support of the church; and be it further

RESOLVED that we direct the Permanent Committees and Agencies of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America to review their policies, procedures and practices in the area of child protection, including their response to child sexual abuse disclosures, their faithfulness in reporting child sexual abuse to duly appointed God-ordained civil authorities, their care for survivors of child sexual abuse, and their future plans to help educate the PCA on child sexual abuse, and report back to the 43rd General Assembly; and be it finally

RESOLVED that the 42nd General Assembly urge all members of the PCA to renew our allegiance to our Lord Jesus by loving our children as he loves our children, “for to such belongs the Kingdom of God” (Mark 10:14).

APPENDIX B – ADULT VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM



SafeChurch ADULT VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

It is the goal of Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church to create a safe and secure environment for all children and workers who are involved in church activities. To facilitate this emphasis, it is necessary to gather pertinent information from those who desire to offer volunteer services to our Children's and Youth and Family Ministries. This information will be used for the sole purpose of helping the church provide a safe and secure environment for children and workers.

Personal Information:

Name: _____ Date: _____

Date of birth: _____ Social Security No.: _____

Have you ever used any name(s) other than the one above? If yes, please list:

Current street address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Years at address: _____

Previous address: _____

Current phone number (Home): _____ (Work): _____

Please respond to all questions below that apply to the position for which you are volunteering:

Position volunteering for: _____

When are you available to work? _____

Do you have a valid driver's license? _____ Commercial license? _____

License number: _____ State issued: _____

Current employer: _____ Length of employment: _____

Name of supervisor: _____ Phone number: _____

Previous employers (within last five years):

Employer: _____ Dates employed: _____

Employer: _____ Dates employed: _____

Employer: _____ Dates employed: _____

Employer: _____ Dates employed: _____

Employer: _____ Dates employed: _____

Employer: _____ Dates employed: _____

Is there any reason you should NOT work with or around children or youth? _____

Have you ever been the subject of a child abuse investigation? _____

If yes, please provide details: _____

Have you ever been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a criminal offense? _____

If yes, please provide details: _____

Please list your education background:

	Name of School	Grad Year	Degree or course of study
High School:	_____	_____	_____
College:	_____	_____	_____
Other:	_____	_____	_____

Please provide the following church information:

What, if any, church affiliation do you have? _____

How long have you attended that church? _____ Are you a member? _____

List other churches with which you have been affiliated: _____

Have you ever worked with youth or children? _____

Where and in what capacity? _____

Please list two references (at least one must be a non-RMPC member/regular attender):

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Years known each other: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Years known each other: _____

I hereby give permission to make a thorough investigation of my past employment, education, and background, and release from liability all persons, companies, or corporations supplying such information. I also release Rincon Mountain Presbyterian Church from any liability that might result from making such an investigation. I understand that any false statements or implications made by me on this application or other required documentation shall be considered sufficient cause for denial of employment or discharge.

Signature

Date

APPENDIX C – TEEN VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM



It is the goal of this church to create a safe and secure environment for all children and workers who are involved in church activities. To facilitate this emphasis, it is necessary to gather pertinent information from those who desire employment or offer volunteer services to our children's ministry. This information will be used for the sole purpose of helping the church provide a safe and secure environment for children and workers.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Date of birth: _____

Current street address: _____

Current phone number (Home): _____ (Cell): _____

Position volunteering for: _____

What, if any, church affiliation do you have? _____

How long have you attended that church? _____ Are you a member? _____

Have you ever worked with children? _____ List where: _____

Is there any reason you should NOT work with or around children? _____

If so, please specify: _____

Signature of Applicant

Date

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

Date

APPENDIX D – BACKGROUND CHECK RELEASE FORM

DISCLOSURE and AUTHORIZATION – BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION

In connection with my application for employment or to serve as a volunteer with [Insert Organization Name] (“Client”), I understand that a “consumer report” and/or “investigative consumer report”, as defined by the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. § 1681), will be requested by Client for employment or volunteer purposes, whichever is applicable, from Protect My Ministry, Inc., (“Protect My Ministry”), a consumer reporting agency as defined by the Fair Credit Reporting Act. These reports may include information as to my character, general reputation, personal characteristics or mode of living, whichever are applicable. They may involve interviews with sources such as my neighbors, friends or associates. The report may also contain information about me relating to my criminal history, credit history, driving and/or motor vehicle records, social security number verification, verification of education or employment history, worker’s compensation (only after a conditional job offer) or other background checks. Such reports may be obtained at any time after receipt of this Disclosure and Authorization and if I am hired or serve as a volunteer, whichever is applicable, throughout the course of my employment or volunteer service, as permitted by law and unless revoked by me in writing. Client also reserves the right to share my report with any third-party with whom I will be placed to work or volunteer with as a representative of Client. I understand that I have the right, upon written request made within a reasonable amount of time after the receipt of this notice, to request disclosure of the nature and scope of any investigative consumer report to Protect My Ministry, Inc., 14499 N. Dale Mabry Hwy., Suite 201 South, Tampa, FL 33618 or 1- 800-319-5581. For information about Protect My Ministry’s privacy practices, see www.protectmyministry.com.

Acknowledgement and Authorization

By signing below, I authorize Client or its authorized agents to obtain or prepare consumer reports or investigative consumer reports about me. I acknowledge receipt of a copy of the federal notice entitled A Summary of Your Rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act and certify that I have read this Disclosure and Authorization as well as the summary document explaining my rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

Signature _____

TODAY’S DATE _____

LAST NAME FIRST NAME MIDDLE NAME/INITIAL _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

CITY COUNTY STATE ZIP _____

SSN _____

D/L or STATE ID _____ STATE ISSUED _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

For identification purposes only, please provide FULL DOB: _____

Please List Other Names Used _____

State Consumer Reporting Requirements – Background Investigation

Residents of California and Maine only: Under state law you have a right to receive a copy of your investigative consumer report and/or consumer credit report, free of charge, if one is requested by Client. By checking the box below a copy of your report will be provided to you at the address you provide on the Disclosure and Authorization.

I wish to receive a copy of any report on me that is requested.

Residents of Massachusetts only: Under state law you have a right to receive a copy of your investigative consumer report if one is requested by Client. By checking the box below a copy of your report will be provided to you at the address you provide on the Disclosure and Authorization.

I wish to receive a copy of any report on me that is requested.

Residents of Minnesota and Oklahoma only: Under state law you have a right to receive a copy of your consumer report, free of charge, if one is required by Client. By checking the below box, a copy will be provided to you at the address you provide on the Disclosure and Authorization.

I wish to receive a copy of any report on me that is requested.

Residents of New York only: Under state law you have the right to inspect and receive a copy of any investigative consumer report requested by Client by contacting Protect My Ministry directly. You also acknowledge receipt of a copy of Article 23-A of the New York Correction Law by checking the below box.

I wish to receive a copy of any report on me that is requested.

Residents of Washington State only: Under state law you have a right to request a copy of the Washington Fair Credit Reporting Act's disclosure to consumers (RCW 19.182.070) and a copy of your report by contacting Protect My Ministry directly.

APPENDIX E – INCIDENT REPORT FORM

*Youth and Children's Ministry***YOUTH AND CHILD ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORT**Date: _____ Name of preparer: *(printed)* _____Is this an: accident incident allegation other *(specify)* _____

Name(s) of child(ren)/youth: _____

How was the incident brought to your attention? _____

Adults witnessing or present during incident: _____

Person reporting the incident: _____

Date, time, and location of incident: _____

Description of the incident as reported or witnessed: _____

Did anyone else witness the event? If so, list names: _____

Were there visible injuries? If yes, please list: _____

How were the injuries treated? _____

Who treated the injuries? _____

Were parents/guardians notified? _____ List the date/time: _____

Is this an incident requiring mandatory reporting to authorities? _____

Were any authorities notified? _____ Who? _____ When? _____

Was the insurance company notified? _____ When? _____

What other aspects or details do you need to include? _____

Signature: _____ Position: _____

APPENDIX F – SIGNS OF ABUSE

Resource taken from a regional private psychiatric hospital serving adolescents in New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona, including trauma care for minors.

CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING VICTIMS OF ABUSE			
CHILD ABUSE			
APPENDIX			
TYPE	PHYSICAL CRITERIA	BEHAVIORAL CRITERIA VICTIM	BEHAVIORAL CRITERIA ABUSER
Physical Abuse	<p>Injuries which are unexplained or explanation is inconsistent with medical findings.</p> <p>Bruises and welts:</p> <p>On lips, mouth, torso, back, buttocks, thighs patterns descriptive of object used. E.g. belt buckle, hand squeeze/pinch, wooden spoon, chain, rope present in various stages of healing</p> <p>Burns:</p> <p>On soles of feet, palms of hands, back, buttocks descriptive of object used, e.g. cigarette, glove-li immersion in scalding water, coils from stove absence of splash marks and presence of symmetric burns present in various stages of healing</p> <p>Fractures, dislocations:</p> <p>Skull, nose, facial structures Injury denote type of abuse, e.g. spiral fracture or dislocation from twisting of an extremity or whiplash from shaking the child present in various stages of healing.</p> <p>Lacerations and abrasions:</p> <p>arms, legs, torso, face, external genitalia, unusual symptoms, e.g. abnormal swelling, pain and vomiting from punching descriptive marks, e.g. human bites, pulling out hair present in various stages of healing</p> <p>Chemical:</p> <p>Unexplained repeated poisoning, especially drug overdose</p> <p>Unexplained sudden illness, e.g. hypoglycemia from insulin</p>	<p>Fearful, withdrawn, passive, especially in presence of abuser.</p> <p>Wary of physical contact with adults</p> <p>Apparent fear of parents or going home</p> <p>Lying very still while surveying environment</p> <p>Inappropriate reaction to injury, e.g. failure to cry from pain</p> <p>Lack of reaction to frightening events</p> <p>Apprehensive when hearing other children cry</p> <p>Indiscriminate friendliness and Displays of affection</p> <p>Superficial relationships</p> <p>Acting out behavior, e.g. Aggressiveness</p> <p>Withdrawal behavior</p>	<p>Overly concerned</p> <p>Overly protective</p> <p>Tries to prevent patient from being alone or speaking privately with others.</p> <p>Belittles/demeans patient</p> <p>Controlling/speaks for patient when patient is present and capable of speaking for self</p> <p>Refusal to accept/allow medical treatment for patient</p>

CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING VICTIMS OF ABUSE			
CHILD ABUSE			
APPENDIX A			
TYPE	PHYSICAL CRITERIA	BEHAVIORAL CRITERIA VICTIM	BEHAVIORAL CRITERIA ABUSER
Sexual Abuse	<p>Bruises, bleeding, lacerations, irritation external genitalia, anus mouth or throat</p> <p>Torn, stained or bloody underclothing</p> <p>Pain on urination, pain swelling, itching genital area</p> <p>Penile discharge</p> <p>Sexually transmitted disease, nonspecific vaginitis, venereal warts.</p> <p>Difficulty in walking, sitting</p> <p>Unusual odor in the genital area</p> <p>Recurrent urinary tract infection</p> <p>Presence of sperm</p> <p>Pregnancy in young adolescent</p>	<p>Fearful, withdrawn, passive, especially presence of abuser.</p> <p>Sudden emergence of sexually related problems, including excessive or public masturbation, age inappropriate sexual play, promiscuity, overly seductive behavior</p> <p>Withdrawn, excessive daydreaming</p> <p>Preoccupied with fantasies</p> <p>Poor relationships with peers</p> <p>Sudden changes, e/g. anxiety, loss or gain of weight, clinging behavior</p> <p>Incestuous relationship, excessive anger at mother or not protecting daughter</p> <p>Regressive behavior, e.g. thumb sucking, bed wetting</p> <p>Sudden onset of phobias, fears particularly fears of the dark, men, strangers, particular settings or situations, e.g. undue fear of leaving the house or staying at the day care center or sitter's house.</p> <p>Running away from home.</p> <p>Substance abuse, Profound and rapid personality</p> <p>Changes, especially extreme depression, hostility and aggression</p> <p>Rapidly declining school performance</p>	<p>Overly concerned</p> <p>Overly protective</p> <p>Tries to prevent patient from being speaking privately with others.</p> <p>Controlling/speaks for patient when patient is present and capable of speaking for self</p> <p>Refusal to accept/allow medical treatment for patient.</p>

CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING VICTIMS OF ABUSE			
CHILD ABUSE			
APPENDIX			
TYPE	PHYSICAL CRITERIA	BEHAVIORAL CRITERIA VICTIM	BEHAVIORAL CRITERIA ABUSER
Physical Neglect	<p>Failure to Thrive</p> <p>Signs of Malnutrition</p> <p>Poor Personal Hygiene</p> <p>Unclean/inappropriate Dress</p> <p>Evidence of Poor healthcare, e.g. Non-immunization, untreated infections</p> <p>Frequent injuries from lack of Supervision.</p>	<p>Dull/Inactive</p> <p>Excessively passive/sleep</p> <p>Older child</p> <p>Stealing/begging for food</p> <p>Absenteeism from school</p> <p>Drug/alcohol addiction</p> <p>Vandalism/shoplifting</p>	<p>Overly concerned</p> <p>Overly protective Tries to prevent patient from being alone or speaking privately with other.</p> <p>Belittles/demeans patient</p> <p>Controlling/speaks for patient when Patient is present and capable of speaking for self.</p> <p>Refusal to accept/allow medical treatment for patient.</p>
Emotional Abuse and Neglect	<p>Failure to thrive</p> <p>Feeding disorders</p> <p>Enuresis</p> <p>Sleep disorders</p>	<p>Self stimulating disorders, e.g. biting, rocking, sucking.</p> <p>During infancy, lack of social smile and stranger anxiety</p> <p>Anti-social behavior, e.g. Destructiveness, stealing, Cruelty</p> <p>Extremes in behavior, e.g, overtly compliant, and passive or aggressive and demanding</p> <p>Lags in emotional and intellectual development</p> <p>Suicide attempts</p>	<p>Overly concerned</p> <p>Overly protective</p> <p>Tries to prevent patient from being Alone or speaking privately with others</p> <p>Battles/demeans patient</p> <p>Controlling/speaks for patient when Patient is present and capable of speaking for self</p> <p>Refusal to accept/allow medical treatment for patient.</p>