

NORTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SAFE BOUNDARIES POLICY

This Safe Boundaries Policy has been adopted by the Session of Northminster Presbyterian Church in Evanston, Illinois (“Northminster” or the “Church”).

PREAMBLE

... As [God] who called you is holy,
be holy yourselves in all your conduct;
... Tend the flock of God that is in your charge, ...
not under compulsion but willingly, ...
not for sordid gain but eagerly. ...
Do not lord it over those in your charge,
but be examples to the flock.

... You know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.
1 Peter 1:15; 5:2-3; James 3:1, NRSV

The ethical and responsible conduct of all who minister in the name of Jesus Christ is of vital importance to the church because through these representatives an understanding of God and the gospel’s good news is conveyed. “Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world” (*Book of Order*, G-2.0104).

The basic principles guiding this policy are as follows:

- A. Sexual misconduct is a violation of the rule that those who are called to leadership roles in the church are equally called upon to exercise integrity, sensitivity, and caring in a trust relationship. Sexual misconduct breaks the covenant to act in the best interests of those whom the church serves.
- B. Sexual misconduct is a misuse of authority and power that breaches Christian ethical principles by misusing a trust relationship to gain advantage over another for personal pleasure in an abusive, exploitative, and unjust manner. If the person being served initiates or invites sexual content in the relationship, it is the responsibility of the person providing service to maintain the appropriate role and prohibit a sexual relationship.
- C. Sexual misconduct is often perpetrated against persons who are less able to protect themselves, including children. It is antithetical to the gospel call to work as God’s servant in the struggle to bring wholeness to a broken world, and violates the mandate to protect children and others from harm.
- D. Children and youth are vulnerable to more than the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse by adults or peers. Physical and emotional abuse or neglect are also grievous violations of the scriptural command to “Tend the flock of God that is in your charge.” The church must be safe for children before it can offer *shalom* to all persons entrusted to its care.

As spiritual leaders and teachers, we are bound by our Scriptures and promises made at Baptism to create safe spaces for all persons of all ages birth to death.

DEFINITIONS

- A. **Accused.** The person against whom an accusation of sexual misconduct or child abuse or neglect is being made.
- B. **Accuser.** The person claiming knowledge of sexual misconduct or child abuse or neglect by a person covered by this policy. The accuser may or may not be the victim of the alleged sexual misconduct, child abuse or neglect.
- C. **Activity.** A program or event sponsored by or under the control of Northminster.
- D. **Child.** Any person age twelve years or younger.
- E. **Congregational Property.** Property owned or controlled by Northminster.
- F. **Emotional Abuse.** Unusually harsh, offensive or insensitive conduct toward another person that causes or is likely to cause emotional distress. Examples can include criticism, badgering, teasing, ridicule, rejection, humiliation, blame or unfavorable comparisons with other children or adults.
- G. **Mandated Reporter.** Any person required by law to report to the appropriate state agency all suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect that come to his or her attention. Under most state child protection statutes, mandated reporters are professionals who may work with children in the course of their professional duties. Teaching elders and commissioned ruling elders are mandated reporters under the laws of most states, including Illinois. The Book of Order further classifies teaching and ruling elders, deacons and certified Christian educators as mandated reporters for both child abuse and abuse of adults who lack mental capacity.
- H. **Misuse of Technology.** The use of technology that results in sexually harassing or abusing another person, or emotionally abusing an adult or child, including but not limited to the use of social media, texting or emailing suggestive messages and images to persons. It is never appropriate to view pornography on congregational property. If pornography includes a person under the age of eighteen, it is considered child abuse. There is never an expectation of personal privacy when using technological equipment owned by Northminster, or within the context of ministry.
- I. **Neglect.** The failure of a parent or responsible caretaker to provide adequate supervision, food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education or other basic necessity to a child or an adult without the mental capacity to consent.
- J. **Parent.** A parent or legal guardian of a child who is participating in an activity.
- K. **Physical Abuse.** Any act that results in non-accidental injury to another or involves harmful, potentially harmful or offensive touching of another. It may involve physical violence in which the perpetrator is out of control and may include corporeal punishment or hazing.
- L. **Response.** The action taken by the appropriate Northminster staff or entity when a report of sexual misconduct or child abuse or neglect is received. It may include inquiry into facts and circumstances, or possible disciplinary action, up to and including termination of

employment, or removal from office and/or membership. The Northminster staff or entity may also request assistance from the Presbytery through the True North Response Team or the Safe Space Team. The assistance provided could be educational programs, pastoral care or consultation regarding the circumstances surrounding the report of sexual misconduct or child abuse or neglect.

M. Sexual Abuse. Any offense involving sexual conduct in relation to:

1. any person under the age of eighteen years or anyone over the age of eighteen years without the mental capacity to consent; or
2. any person when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of office or position (D-10.0401c).

N. Sexual Harassment. Conduct that includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, tormenting based on gender, and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature. In particular, sexual harassment occurs if:

1. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or of his or her participation in Church activities;
2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is the basis for employment decisions or other Church-related decisions affecting that individual;
3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance or participation in Church activities by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment;
4. such conduct, regardless of its intention, is objected to by the person at whom it is directed; or
5. such conduct includes unsolicited and unwelcome contact such as the following:
 - a. written contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene letters, notes, emails, text messages or invitations;
 - b. verbal contact, such as sexually suggestive or obscene comments, threats, slurs, epithets, jokes or sexual propositions;
 - c. physical contact, such as intentional touching, pinching, brushing against another's body, impeding or blocking movement, assault or sexual coercion; and
 - d. visual contact, such as leering or staring at another's body, gesturing, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, posters, or magazines.

P. Sexual Misconduct. Any sexual abuse of children or adults and/or any sexual harassment. Sexual misconduct occurs when there is sexual involvement between a person in a ministerial relationship and another person "when the conduct includes force, threat, coercion, intimidation, or misuse of ordered ministry or position" (D-10.0401c).

Q. Staff Member or Employee. A person employed by or contracted with Northminster.

- R. User Groups.** Any group that participates in any activity or event sponsored by or that utilizes Church property. User groups include, but are not limited to, the Northminster Nursery School, Northminster Sunday School, Northminster youth groups, including youth music groups, Mom’s Morning Out, Family Promise, Vacation Bible School, other Christian Education and youth activities, Appalachian Service Project, and Boy Scout Troop 924.
- S. Victim.** A person who has allegedly suffered an act of sexual misconduct or physical or emotional abuse, or, a child or an adult without mental capacity to consent who has allegedly suffered neglect.
- T. Volunteer.** A person who provides services for Northminster and receives no benefit or remuneration. Volunteers include, but are not limited to, persons elected or appointed to serve on boards, committees, and other groups.
- U. Youth.** Any person age thirteen through eighteen. For purposes of this definition, a person in sixth grade or above, even if not age thirteen, is considered a youth.

CREATING A SAFE SPACE PROGRAM IN OUR CONGREGATION

- A. Purpose:** Child abuse and neglect is a serious problem in our society and, unfortunately, within our Christian community. Abuse and neglect often occur in settings where children and persons with disabilities that leave them more vulnerable, grow to completely trust adults...in homes, schools, camps, athletic and park programs, retreats and churches. As people entrusted with the lives of children and adults, we believe that we have a profound moral and legal obligation to reduce the possibility of abuse and neglect from happening to those participating in church related programs, and programs in our buildings. The purpose of this Safe Space Document is to help congregations of all sizes to make their activities a safer place for participants by instituting policies and procedures that guard against abuse and neglect.

A Safe Space Program designed by our congregation is designed to:

1. Safeguard children, youth and adults with limitations from abuse.
2. Provide assurance to families that their children are safe and secure while participating in church based or church sponsored and led activities on site and off site.
3. Assure proper reporting when there is reasonable cause to believe that child or adult abuse or neglect has occurred.

- B. Safe Space Standards**

- 1. Two-deep leadership.** At least two adults are required to provide leadership for all trips and outings. Appropriate adult leadership must be present for all overnight activities; coed overnight activities require male and female leadership, both of whom must be adults, and must have completed all required training and screening. User groups are responsible for ensuring that sufficient leadership is provided for all activities in which they are involved and for all activities on church property.

2. **Adult-Child Ratios.** Licensed nursery school classes and activities conducted through the Northminster Nursery School shall be subject to the applicable adult-child ratios required by the State of Illinois. For all other Northminster activities, in addition to having a minimum of two adult leaders for each event, the following ratios of adults to children will be maintained:

<u>Youth Age</u>	<u>Adult</u>	<u>Overnight Events</u>	<u>Day Events</u>
0 – 3 years	1	4 children	5 children
4 – 5 years	1	5 children	6 children
6 – 8 years	1	6 children	8 children
9 – 14 years	1	8 children	10 children
15 – 18 years	1	10 children	10 children

3. **Two-Years-Older.** All staff and other leadership must be at least 24 months older than the oldest child participating in the activity.
4. **No one-on-one private meetings or other contact.** One-on-one contact between adults and children is not permitted. In situations that require personal conferences, such as pastoral counseling, the meeting is to be conducted in view of other adults and youth. Meetings in public spaces are not considered private meetings. For purposes of these Safe Space Standards, hallways are considered public spaces.
5. **Separate accommodations.** When engaged in overnight activities, adult supervision is required in the sleeping accommodations and the adult – child ratio as stated in paragraph IV.B.2. above will be followed. Separate shower and bathroom facilities must be available for males and females. When separate facilities are not available, separate times for male and female use should be scheduled and posted for showers. Likewise, children and adults must shower at different times.
6. **Respect of privacy.** Adults must respect the privacy of children in situations such as changing clothes and taking showers, and intrude only to the extent that health and safety require. Adults must protect their own privacy in similar situations. Respect for privacy includes wearing proper clothing. For example, skinny-dipping or revealing bathing suits are not appropriate.
7. **Alcohol, tobacco, and controlled substances.** The use of alcoholic beverages and controlled substances shall not be permitted by any person at any time during Church activities or on property owned by the Church, with the exception of the manse. This rule applies regardless of the presence of children. Further, adults shall support the attitude that they, as well as children, are better off without tobacco in any form. Therefore the use of tobacco by adults shall not be permitted in the presence of children. The use of tobacco by children shall not be permitted at any time.
8. **Cameras, imaging, and digital devices.** While most persons use cameras and other imaging devices responsibly, it has become very easy to invade the privacy of individuals. It is inappropriate to use any device capable of recording or transmitting visual images in shower houses, restrooms, or other areas where privacy is expected by participants. Any transmission of sexually explicit photographs or videos electronically and any “sexting” by cell phones is prohibited.
9. **No secret organizations.** Northminster does not recognize secret organizations. All

aspects of Church-sponsored activities are to be open to all who wish to participate and are of an age that is appropriate for the activity. All activities shall be open to observation by parents and adults.

- 10. Hazing prohibited.** Hazing and initiations are prohibited and shall not be included as part of any activity.
- 11. Bullying prohibited.** Verbal, physical, and cyber bullying are prohibited.
- 12. Constructive discipline.** Discipline used in Church events shall be constructive and reflect Christian values. Corporal punishment is never permitted.
- 13. Environmental Safety.** Church events shall be conducted so as to minimize the risk of accidental injury. Adult leaders should familiarize themselves with basic first aid, as well as applicable safety standards for food handling, aquatic activities, other outdoor environmental hazards such as poisonous plants and lightning as well as possible indoor hazards such as electric wires and cleaning substances. Necessary protective gear, such as helmets, life jackets and sturdy shoes shall be provided.
- 14. User Group responsibilities.** Adult leaders of user groups are responsible for monitoring the behavior of youth members and for interceding when necessary. Parents of youth participants who misbehave shall be informed and appropriate disciplinary measures shall be taken. User groups are responsible for complying with the Safe Boundaries Policy.
- 15. Covenant of Christian Community.** A covenant agreement (Attachment E) must be signed by all persons, adult or child, participating in any Church event and also by the parents of any child participating in the event.

PREVENTION

A. Screening.

- 1. Reference checks.** All Northminster staff governed by this policy shall list three personal references on the Reference, Disclosure and Consent Form attached as Appendix A. References will be checked using the Reference Check Form attached as Appendix B.
- 2. Background checks.** Criminal background checks and sex offender reviews will be performed on all persons governed by this policy. Other background checks, such as motor vehicle record reports and credit reports, will be performed as needed. Appendix A contains a consent to background checks for job applicants; Appendix A-2 contains a consent to background checks for volunteers. Persons governed by this policy shall provide such additional information and shall give such additional consents as may be necessary from time to time to carry out the purposes of this policy.
- 3. Transportation.** All persons providing transportation must provide a copy of their drivers' license and a copy of their insurance card to the person in charge of the activity. Any professional transportation provider should be bonded and provide proof of insurance. Drivers may only transport the number of people based on the working seat belts in their vehicle.

4. **Additional checks.** Any person attending an activity and/or any volunteer congregation member may, at the discretion of the person in charge of the activity, be asked to undergo additional screening procedures.
5. **Recordkeeping.** The Pastor or The Pastor's designee shall be responsible for maintaining copies of all reference checks, background checks and all Reference, Disclosure and Consent Forms. All records shall be strictly confidential and may be shared only on a need-to-know basis.
6. **Prevention through education.** Both the True North Response Team and the Safe Space Team are available to provide educational programming in congregations for leaders and members of congregations.

RESPONSE TO INCIDENT

- A. **Immediate Safety.** When a person governed by this policy becomes aware of alleged violations of this policy he or she will first determine if there are safety issues. If there is an immediate danger to any person, all necessary steps shall be taken to insure the person's safety. These may include calling for medical assistance or reporting the incident to the police.
- B. **Reporting the Incident.**
 1. **Initial Report to Pastor.** A person having knowledge of suspected sexual misconduct or any other form of abuse or neglect shall report the incident immediately to the Pastor of Northminster, to the person in charge of the activity or to the Executive Presbyter or Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Chicago. If the pastor is not available, the initial report is made to the person in charge of the activity, who will inform the Pastor or the presbytery as soon as possible. If the alleged behavior involves possible criminal activity, the Pastor or the person in charge of the activity shall notify the police or, if the alleged behavior involves possible abuse or neglect of a child, the reporting procedure in paragraph B. 2. below shall be followed. For purposes of this section, if the Pastor is the accused or is unavailable to act, references to the Pastor shall be deemed to refer to the Associate Pastor, the Session Clerk or, if the Associate Pastor or the Clerk is the accused or unavailable to act, to the Executive Presbyter.
 2. **Report to Child Abuse Hotline.** The Pastor will determine if there is reasonable cause to believe that a child participating in an activity is an abused or neglected child. If such reasonable cause exists, the Pastor will immediately call the applicable state or county Child Abuse Hotline. The oral report shall be followed by a written report on the applicable state reporting form. If the civil authorities determine that the incident should be investigated, they will normally contact the police. (See Appendix D for information on child abuse hotlines and mandated reporters.)
 3. **Notification of Parent or Guardian.** If the victim of the alleged abuse is a child, as soon as practicable after receiving the initial report of the incident, the Pastor shall inform the child's parent or guardian of the incident. If the parent or guardian is suspected of abusing the child, the Pastor will cooperate with civil authorities regarding notification.

- 4. Additional Mandated Reporters.** In many states, certain mandated reporters must report directly to the appropriate authorities even if the Pastor also makes a report. Staff and volunteers who are not mandated reporters may also report an incident to the appropriate civil authorities if they have reasonable cause to suspect that child abuse or neglect may have occurred. (See Appendix D for more information.)
 - 5. Incident report form.** Within 48 hours after the incident, each person with knowledge of the incident shall complete an Incident Report Form and deliver the form to the Pastor or Executive Presbyter. (See Appendix C.)
- C. Church Disciplinary Proceedings.** If the accused is subject to the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and reasonable cause exists to believe that an offense has occurred, the disciplinary proceedings shall be commenced against the accused under the Rules of Discipline by causing a written statement of alleged offense to be filed with the Clerk of the Session of Northminster. If the accused is subject to the jurisdiction of a council other than the Session of Northminster, the Clerk shall submit the written statement to the clerk of session or the Stated Clerk of the council having jurisdiction over the accused.
- D. Investigation.** The person or persons making the initial report shall not conduct an investigation of the incident, but shall take all necessary steps to insure the immediate safety of the alleged victim. Any further investigation shall be conducted by the investigating committee in accordance with the Rules of Discipline, by the appropriate insurance carrier, or by the civil authorities. The Pastor, in consultation with the Executive Presbyter, shall determine to what extent the incident needs to be further investigated separately by Northminster or the Presbytery of Chicago for its own purposes or to provide adequate information to another council that may have an interest. Any such separate investigation by Northminster or the Presbytery of Chicago shall be performed at the direction of and under the supervision of the Pastor and/or Executive Presbyter.
- E. Confidentiality.** Because the accused is presumed innocent until proven guilty, care will be taken to protect confidentiality. While the incident is being investigated, all persons with knowledge of the incident shall maintain strict confidentiality and shall share information with others only as requested or permitted by the Pastor or Executive Presbyter or as required by mandated reporting laws. All third party requests for information shall be referred to the Pastor or the Executive Presbyter.

**APPENDIX A
REFERENCE, DISCLOSURE AND CONSENT FORM**

1. Name: _____
Address: _____
Date of Birth: _____
Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____ Mobile Phone: _____
Occupation: _____
Employer: _____
Student? Yes ___ No ___ If yes, name of school and major: _____
Previous volunteer experience: _____

2. Name of local congregation: _____.

3. References. Please give three references, none of whom are related to you.

a. Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____
Email: _____ Fax: _____

b. Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____
Email: _____ Fax: _____

c. Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____
Email: _____ Fax: _____

4. Disclosure. Please answer the following questions. Attach additional sheets if you need more space.

a. Have you ever been convicted of, or pled guilty or no contest to, a crime?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, give details.

b. Has any civil lawsuit against you alleging actual or attempted sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, sexual misconduct, physical abuse, child abuse or financial misconduct ever been filed?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please give details and describe resolution of the lawsuit.

c. Have you ever terminated your employment, professional credentials or service in a volunteer position, or had your employment, professional credentials or authorization to hold a volunteer position terminated, for reasons relating to allegations of actual or attempted sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, sexual misconduct, physical abuse, child abuse or financial misconduct?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please give details.

d. Do you have a valid driver's license?

Yes _____ No _____

e. Have you ever had your driver's license suspended or revoked due to reckless driving or driving while intoxicated or under the influence of a controlled substance?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please give details.

5. Certification and Consent.

I certify that the foregoing information is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I hereby authorize Northminster to conduct a background check on me and to verify all statements made on this form, and I hereby release the Northminster, and its Session, employees and agents from all liability in connection therewith.

Date: _____

Signature

Social Security Number

**APPENDIX B
REFERENCE CHECK FORM**

Reference check for: _____

Reference name: _____

Reference Address: _____

Reference Phone (h): _____ (w) _____

What is your relationship to this person?

How long have you known this person?

How would you describe this person's character?

How would you describe this person's ability to work with others?

What are this person's strengths?

Does this person have any weaknesses? If so, please describe.

Do you have any knowledge that this person has ever been accused of sexual misconduct?

Please list any other comments you would like to make:

Reference inquiry completed by:

(Print) _____ Signature _____ Date _____

All responses will be kept confidential and shared only with those who have a legitimate need to know.

**APPENDIX C
INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

Date of Report: _____

1. REPORTER INFORMATION (please print)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ / _____ - _____ Email _____

Cell Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Other: _____

2. ALLEGED VICTIM INFORMATION (if different from reporter) (please print)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ / _____ - _____ Email _____

Cell Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Other: _____

3. ACCUSED (please print)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ / _____ - _____ Email _____

Cell Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Other: _____

4. DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT

Please describe the incident(s) of sexual misconduct, including date, time, and location of each incident.

5. MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

If medical assistance or first aid was provided at the scene, please describe the assistance given and the medical disposition (taken to hospital, etc.).

6. OTHERS HAVING KNOWLEDGE OF THE INCIDENT

Please list the name, address, and phone number of each person who may have information related to or pertinent to the incident. Give email and cell phone if available.

7. OTHER INFORMATION

Please give any additional information that may be helpful.

If you need more room to answer any questions, please attach additional sheets.

Return this form to the Senior Pastor OR Person In Charge of the Activity

APPENDIX D Child Abuse Hotline

Child Protection Statutes

Most states have child protection statutes that provide for reporting incidents of child abuse or neglect. The Illinois statute is the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, 325 ILCS 5/1 et seq. administered by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services ("DCFS").

Mandated Reporters

Mandated reporters are professionals who may work with children in the course of their professional duties. Mandated reporters are required by the applicable child protection statute to report to state authorities when they have reasonable cause to suspect that child abuse or neglect may have occurred. The Illinois statute names seven categories of mandated reporters, namely: medical personnel, school personnel, social service/mental health professionals, law enforcement personnel, coroner/medical examiner personnel, child care personnel and members of the clergy. The Illinois statute requires that mandated reporters sign a statement acknowledging their status as mandated reporters before they commence employment. The statement is made on one of two DCFS forms, entitled Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status and Acknowledgement of Mandated Reporter Status (Clergy). The acknowledgement forms must be retained by the employer. Presbytery of Chicago staff and volunteers who are not teaching elders and who are not among the categories of professionals listed in the applicable child protection statute are not mandated reporters.

Child Abuse Hotline

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect is required to immediately report or cause a report to be made to DCFS, DHS or the applicable child protection agency. In most cases, the reporting requirement will be satisfied if the Senior Pastor makes the report, but if the Senior Pastor or other Clergy fail to report, the mandated reporter must nevertheless make the report if he or she has reasonable cause to believe that child abuse or neglect may have occurred. Note, however, that the Illinois statute requires that mandated reporters who are staff members of a medical or other public or private institution, school, facility or agency or a member of the clergy, must make the report personally, and may not rely on the institution, school, facility, agency or congregation to make the report. Northminster staff members and volunteers who are teaching elders, therefore, should make the report themselves and should inform the Senior Pastor or Executive Presbyter of Chicago Presbytery that they have made the report.

The initial report is an oral report made by calling the Child Abuse Hotline. Following are hotline numbers:

In Illinois, the Department of Children and Family Services: 1-800-252-2873.

Illinois Elder Abuse Hotline: 1-866-800-1409 (For suspected mistreatment in the home).
1-800-252-8966 (For suspected mistreatment in facilities)

The oral report to the Child Abuse Hotline must be followed by a written report on the applicable state reporting form. In Illinois, the written report must be made within 48 hours after the initial

hotline report.

In addition to mandated reporters, persons who are not mandated reporters are also permitted to make reports of suspected child abuse or neglect. Whether or not the person making the report is a mandated reporter, his or her identity is protected by statute, and a person who makes a report in good faith is immune from civil or criminal liability.

Criteria needed for a child abuse or neglect investigation:

- The alleged victim is a child under 18 years or person of diminished capacity.
- The alleged perpetrator is a parent, guardian, foster parent, relative caregiver or any person responsible for the child's welfare at the time of the alleged abuse or neglect. (This applies only to filing a report with DCFS. Any person who abuses a child must be reported under the other provisions of this policy)
- There is a specific incident of abuse or neglect or a specific set of circumstances involving suspected abuse or neglect.
- There is demonstrated harm to the child or a substantial risk of physical or sexual injury to the child.

Information the reporter should have ready to give to the Hotline:

- Names, birth dates (or approximate ages), genders, races, etc. for all adult and child subjects.
- Addresses for all victims and perpetrators, including current location.
- Information about the siblings or other family members, if available.
- Specific information about the abusive incident or the circumstances contributing to risk of harm.
- When the incident occurred and the extent of the injuries.
- How the child says it happened and any other pertinent information.
- Reporters should be prepared to provide phone numbers where they may be reached throughout the day in case the Hotline must call back for more information.

Additional information:

For additional information on reporting statutes and procedures, check the applicable state child protection website. In Illinois, the website is at <http://www.state.il.us/dcfs>.

APPENDIX E: RETREAT COVENANT

TO ALL YOUTH PARTICIPANTS, LEADERS, AND PARENTS: PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

YOUTH AND ADULT PARTICIPANTS: Your signature is required.

PARENTS: Your signature is required.

YOUTH LEADERS: Be sure each person has completed this Covenant.

Please return these forms to _____ prior to the event, or retreat.

Name of Participant (please print) _____
Church _____

THE RETREAT COVENANT

At this gathering, we will be doing our best to live together as a family in Christian community. Family life is based on love, respect, trust, support, and on spending time together. To create and maintain this relationship of family and community, each person agrees to the following covenant:

1. As members of Northminster, we will welcome every individual as a person deserving of trust and respect. Bringing ourselves together calls us to be caring and sensitive to our differences and open to making new friends.
2. As guests of the congregation, each person is to abide by the congregation's guidelines for conduct and respect their wishes regarding care of their property. At our mission projects, retreats and all youth events, there will be no smoking, no alcoholic beverages, no illegal drugs, and no inappropriate sexual behavior.
3. As a participant of this planned event, each person is expected to attend all scheduled activities and to follow the instructions of adult leaders. Adult leaders are responsible for helping all youth keep the covenant and are expected to keep it themselves.

Through my participation in ____ (name of event) ____, I recognize that I am joining this Christian family and community. I agree to abide by this covenant while I am a member of this community. I understand that if I break this covenant, I may be sent home at my parent's expense and my congregation's session may be notified.

Signature of Participant: _____

TO BE SIGNED BY PARENT/GUARDIAN (for any participant under 18 at the time of the event)

I have read Northminster's Retreat Covenant and I understand that if my son/daughter breaks the covenant and a decision is made to send him/her home, it will be at my expense.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX F

RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

I have received Northminster's Safe Boundaries Policy, acknowledge its contents, and agree to abide by its standards.

I understand and agree that, as an exception to the Safe Boundaries Policy, it may be necessary and appropriate from time to time for one teacher to escort a child to use the bathroom. To the extent this may apply to my child or children, I consent to the release of my child from Sunday School to an older sibling (a youth under this Policy) without a parent present, and to the release of a youth (sixth grade or older) from Sunday School without the presence of a parent or older sibling.

Date: _____, _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____
(please print your name)

APPENDIX G

**NORTHMINSTER NURSERY SCHOOL:
RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM**

I have received Northminster's Safe Boundaries Policy, acknowledge its contents, and agree to abide by its standards. I understand and acknowledge that the bathroom accompaniment policies and procedures at Northminster Nursery School constitute an agreed exception to the Safe Boundaries Policy.

Date: _____, _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____
(please print your name)