

# Keeping Children Safe at Jubilee

## Introduction

At child dedications Jubilee promises “with humility and seriousness, to share in each child’s nurture and well-being.” Since we are especially interested in the safety of our children, we need to be clear and proactive about how we will reduce risks.

## Child Abuse Prevention:

1. Maintain a Safe Church Environment
  - a. Childrens’ activities will be held in rooms with a door that has a window, or door will remain open. Rooms will remain locked when not in use.
  - b. During any church activity, there will be an adult available for supervision of children.
  - c. Any activity for youth or children conducted away from church premises will have at least two adults providing supervision, and parents must be notified.
  - d. Physical discipline will not be used. If a child misbehaves, adults will redirect or use verbal guidance. The child will be taken to his or her parent for any further action.
  - e. Bullying will not be tolerated in any form and will be addressed immediately.
2. Personnel Issues
  - a. Each year, teachers or leaders of children and youth will be given a copy of the child protection policy and must sign an agreement to keep our children safe.
  - b. A background check will be conducted on final candidates for all church employees who will have contact with children.
  - c. Volunteers will be permitted to work with children only after regularly attending for six months.
3. Deal Appropriately with Allegations of Abuse
  - a. If a child discloses abuse, or if abuse is suspected, child protective services (311) or the police (911) should be notified.
  - b. If an individual is not sure if a situation requires reporting, they should contact the pastor immediately. Alleged offender will be assigned an accountability partner and will accompany that person at all times at all church activities.
  - c. The alleged offender will be removed from all responsibilities involving children or youth while the allegations are being investigated.
  - d. Pastoral care and outside referrals will be offered to all persons affected by allegations of abuse.
4. Policy for Known Sexual Offenders
  - a. Any individual convicted of a sexual offense may not be involved in activities for children or youth, formal or informal. They will not be allowed any unsupervised contact with children.
  - b. Any sexual offender wishing to attend the church will commit to an individualized plan developed by a pastor.

This policy will be made available to all church members and attendees. Church leadership, parents, and all individuals working with youth or children will be given a copy of this policy.

This was adapted from Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship's policy.

Mennonite Church USA (MC USA) has urged churches to evaluate the ways in which each congregation protects children at their church facility and through the programs the church provides. At the prompting of MC USA, the Elders have developed a Safe Sanctuary policy to proactively establish safe practices and strategies using resources from Dove's Nest, an organization which works to equip faith communities to keep children and youth safe. Using resources from Dove's Nest, a committee was formed to write a Safe Sanctuary policy. The committee consisted of Elaine Maust, Lisa Shelly, Christine Maust Beachy, and Joel Beachy. This committee drafted and revised versions of the final document with feedback from the elders. The committee submitted the final draft to the council for their review and input in January. Per this recommendation, we submit this draft to the congregation for approval at the February 12 business meeting. If you have any questions, please contact Joel Beachy at [beachys\\_hawkeyes@yahoo.com](mailto:beachys_hawkeyes@yahoo.com) or 601-604-5979.

