



## Faith Communities Keeping Children & Youth Safe

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### Child and Youth Protection Policy Checklist Schools

Here is a menu of items to be included in a child and youth protection policy for a school.

- Name of school – a policy can be modeled after another, but should be unique to your school
- Definitions of abuse – specific to your state (<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/can/defining>)
- Create a culture of child protection: curriculum/teaching, worship/devotions, policy, administration

#### **Training:**

For whom – indicate how often:

- Teachers    Administrators    Staff    Volunteers    Children and youth

Content:

- Types of abuse, including signs    Risk and protective factors    Response plan

Resources:

- For adults: Harder, J. (2010). *Let the Children Come: Preparing Faith Communities to End Child Abuse and Neglect*. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press. [www.DovesNest.net/letthechildrencome](http://www.DovesNest.net/letthechildrencome)
- For children and youth: *Circle of Grace*. [www.DovesNest.net/circleofgrace](http://www.DovesNest.net/circleofgrace) or <http://archomaha.org/ministries/safe-environment/circle-of-grace/>

#### **Personnel:**

- Application, background checks, interview, references of all teachers, staff (including bus/van drivers), administrators, and volunteers
- Read and agree to abide by the child protection policy annually

#### **Supervision of children and youth:**

- One adult never alone with one child (when not possible, doors open or move to a public space)
- Restroom breaks
- Lunch time
- Before and after school
- Playground and school grounds before, during, and after school
- School busses/vans
- Field trips, sports trips (especially any overnight activities)
- During school events: sports, programs, meetings

#### **Interactions with children and youth:**

- Restorative and age-appropriate discipline
- Appropriate expressions of affection

**Facilities:**

- Windows in inside doors/walls
- All rooms are childproofed (e.g., cleaning supplies, chemicals, outlets)
- Stocked first aid kit

**Response to possible child abuse and neglect:**

- Plan for reporting to authorities (who, when, where to call)
- Plan for keeping children and youth safe (both immediate and longer term)
- Plan for notifying others in the school: children and youth, parents, teachers, staff, administrators, volunteers

**Response to known offender in school community (parent, neighborhood):**

- Plan for quarterly check of sex offender lists in community
- Notification to teachers, staff, administrators, volunteers
- Supervision during parent–teacher events

**Other:**

- Notify parents before child is transported
- Technology safeguards in place: computer labs, cell phone use (including photography), social media use
- Emergency food, clothing, and school supplies available when child/family is in need
- Community referrals known and readily available: counseling for children and families, basic needs, domestic violence, substance abuse, mental illness

**Policy:**

- Adopted
- Implemented – indicate who is responsible
- Accessible (e.g., posted on bulletin boards, website)

Sample child protection policies: [www.DovesNest.net/policies](http://www.DovesNest.net/policies)