

## **Children's Ministry Policies and Procedures Review Document**

### **Document Management:**

Child protection documents need to be thorough and current. These documents require regular review and updates.

- When was the last time your child protection documents were reviewed and updated? If it was more than a couple of years ago, it is time to update it.
- Who is responsible for making the edits and updates to your documents? Is it just one person or is there a team of people managing these documents?
- Who is responsible for approving the documents?
- How would you describe the difference between a policy statement and a procedural statement? Please read this article to help you understand this.
- Go through your current document and identify which statements you would consider more a policy and which would be more of a procedure? Highlight them in different colors and think through the document organization with this in mind. Do you need to make any changes?
- What are some next steps to take to properly maintain these documents?

List any steps needed and goals for completion:

### **Screening:**

Failure to properly screen adults who work with children or applying the screening process inconsistently opens the door for significant liability.

- List the specific screening steps your document requires prior to someone serving in children's ministry.
- How do you verify that every person completes these screening steps prior to serving children?
- Are background checks required or optional?
- If you do background checks, what is included in the information obtained from the check?
- How often do you require background checks to be completed? Consider asking your school system how often they require background checks to understand your community standard.
- What steps do you need to take to have a more thorough screening process? You may find helpful information here.

List any steps needed and goals for completion:

## **Training:**

There is a wide range of topics that should be covered in your training. Getting volunteers to participate in training is also a challenge.

- How often do you provide training for your staff/volunteers in children's ministry?
- List what you cover in each training you offer?
- Does your document include a Code of Conduct that addresses the boundaries adults are to maintain when working with children?
- Do you include a review of the Code of Conduct in your training?
- Do you require all adults to participate in your trainings?
- What are the challenges with requiring training and how might you address those challenges?
- What are some next steps you can take to enhance your trainings? (Some things to consider: Are there key people in critical positions in your ministry that would benefit from more advanced trainings? What topics could be included in those advanced trainings?)

List any steps needed and goals for completion:

## **Mandated Reporting:**

When researching your state's mandated reporter laws, don't just rely on websites that give the requirements for all 50 states. These lists are often not updated in a timely fashion. If your state has recently changed the mandated reporting law, it might not be reflected on that site. Be sure to refer to your state agencies for the most current mandated reporter laws. An example would be your state's Office for Child Advocacy or some similar title.

- Who in your state are mandated reporters?
- Who in your children's ministry program are included in that list of mandated reporters?
- Put in your own words what obligations your state mandated reporter law puts on the church.
- What are the steps your document outlines to fulfill this requirement?
- Who do staff and volunteers report to in the church?
- Do they report to a county office or a state office?
- Does your state mandate a report to be made within a specific time frame?
- If your state doesn't mandate church staff/volunteers report, what are your thoughts on making it a requirement for your church?
- What steps do you need to take to make sure your church understands your reporting protocol?

List any steps needed and goals for completion:

**Leadership:**

- What leadership needs to be engaged in this policy evaluation/updating process?
- Has leadership verified that child sexual abuse is covered in liability coverage?
- Do you feel supported by leadership in implementing you policies and procedures?
- What is your plan for meeting with this leadership?

List any steps needed and goals for completion: