

# CHURCH OF THE KING

## Child Abuse Prevention Policy

Thursday, May 6, 2010

### **Purpose and Intent**

The purpose and intent of CHURCH OF THE KING and its congregation for adopting the Child Abuse Prevention Policy is to demonstrate a commitment of physical safety and spiritual growth of all children and youth participating with CHURCH OF THE KING.

It is also the intent of the leaders and the congregation, by the formation and implementation of the Child Abuse Prevention Policy; to extend the commitment of physical safety and spiritual growth to all church workers and volunteers involved with our children and youth.

The policy will establish reasonable safety measures for the selection of workers and volunteers; implement prudent operational procedures for programs and events; establish educational procedures for workers and volunteers and establish a procedure for reporting and investigating suspected incidents of child abuse within the church.

### **Children's Ministry Oversight Team (CMOT)**

A Children's Ministry Oversight Team (CMOT) will be formed and will take responsibility for the implementation of all policies and procedures pertaining to child abuse prevention.

This team will be comprised of the following:

1. A member of the Church Board of Trustees
2. A representative member (or members) of any of the Children's and Youth Departments
3. A member of the Leadership Team (Elder)

It will be the obligation and responsibility of the CMOT to;

1. Oversee the implementation of the Child Abuse Prevention Policy;
2. Ensure church compliance with this policy;
3. Meet periodically to review and change the policy as the need arises;
4. Make recommendations to the various church boards on improvements to safety relating to child/youth church activities;
5. Investigate and document all reports of suspected child abuse within the church;
6. Report all founded cases of child abuse to the appropriate legal authorities;
7. Offer assistance to the victim of suspected abuse and/or the accused worker/volunteer as the situation dictates;
8. Establish periodic training for church workers/volunteers as it relates to safety and child abuse prevention.

## **Ministry Volunteer Applications and Documentation**

Every church worker/volunteer applying to or already working with children and youth within CHURCH OF THE KING will be required to complete and file with the church office a Ministry Volunteer form (MV) as provided by the church.

Three personal references will accompany the MV form.

Every Ministry Volunteer will submit a criminal records check as provided by the church, which will accompany the MV form. Requests for a criminal records check may be made to the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) or the Office of Court Administration (OCA) of the State of New York.

The CMOT will determine the suitability of applicants for any position relating to work with minors, after which they will submit a report of the application to the Elders for their review. The final decision pertaining to the suitability of the applicant will be made by the Elders.

## **Abuse Reporting and Investigations**

The CMOT will be responsible for ensuring that every church worker, volunteer and congregation member will be made familiar with the process of reporting to the CMO suspected incidents of child abuse.

All reports of suspected child abuse will be brought to the attention of the Elders.

The CMOT will investigate all reports of suspected child abuse. All investigations will be conducted in a timely manner. **The committee will handle all reports and investigations with the greatest degree of confidentiality.**

Investigating committee members will document all reports of suspected child abuse on the Report of Suspected Child Abuse form. All report forms and documentation will be handled with the highest degree of confidentiality and will be filed in the church office in a confidential and secure manner.

The CMO will classify reports of suspected child abuse in one of two ways, Unfounded or Founded.

**Unfounded** reports are of a nature that the CMOT can easily and clearly determine there is no basis for the allegations and no need for further investigation.

**Founded** reports are of a nature that the CMOT feels there may have been abuse committed and additional investigation must be turned over to the proper police authorities.

The church worker, volunteer or staff member suspected or accused of child abuse will be suspended from his or her duties until such time the incident can be investigated properly and determination of the report can be made.

All findings of the CMOT, unfounded or founded, will be documented in the Report of Suspected Child Abuse form.

### **Notifications**

Any CMOT member receiving a report of suspected child abuse must immediately notify the CMOT who will prepare and implement the procedures for investigation.

### **Victim Assistance**

Reports and acts of child abuse can be devastating to both the suspected victim as well as the suspect accused whether founded or unfounded. The Child Abuse Prevention Committee should be knowledgeable of crisis counseling organizations within the area and provide victims with this information as needed.

### **Outside Organization Responsibility**

Any person(s) or organization(s) not actually part of Church of The King involved in child/youth activities held on COTK property must sign an agreement to adhere to the Child Abuse Prevention Policy of COTK.

Should any person(s) or organization(s) using Church of The King facilities be made aware of any act of suspected child abuse, that person or organization shall report such act to the Church Office and the pastor within 24 (twenty four) hours of the alleged incident.

### **Safety Review**

The CMOT will assist the Board of Trustees and the Elders by making recommendations on improvements to child/youth safety. These recommendations may include, but not be limited to; physical security changes to the church building, procedural changes or policy changes within the church as they relate to the safety of the church children, youth and staff.

### **Policy Review**

The CMOT will meet not less than annually to review the Child Abuse Prevention Policy. The committee will make changes to the policy as needed to ensure the policy remains current and effective.

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