

HYDE PARK UNITED METHODIST CHILD & YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

Our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection to children and youth.

To this end, the Child & Youth Protection Policy is mandated by the Florida Annual Conference.

These guidelines, together with your own moral compass, ensure the safety of our children and youth, as well as, your protection as a volunteer.

Please initial each policy item as you read the policy.

Policy

_____ 2 Person Rule – never be alone with a student (if only one adult is in room, keep the door open and all windows uncovered.)

_____ No private conversations with children or youth without another adult (screened or parent) in the conversation

- Zooms (2 or more)
- Social Media (Do not friend first)
- Emails (copy an adult)
- Texting (group or with parents)
- Phone Calls (inform parents in advance)

_____ Door windows of rooms need to remain uncovered.

_____ All activities must have at least one screened adult.

_____ Appropriate Touch – men & women give side hugs, high-fives, fist bumps to the students; no sitting on laps.

_____ Restrooms – escort the student to the door, wait outside. Only paid staff members are allowed to change diapers or assist with bathroom needs.

_____ All students through Grade 5 must be dropped off and picked up by an adult.

_____ If you are waiting for a student to be picked up after an event, there must be at least two adults (or an adult and volunteer youth) waiting with the student and one of them should be of the same gender as the student.

_____ Do not drive one on one with a student. Make sure to have at least two adults in the vehicle and one of them should be of the same gender as the student.

_____ During overnight activities, males and females should sleep on separate floors or in a space separated by a barrier.

_____ If a student wishes to confide in you, do not promise secrecy. Steps may need to be taken on behalf of that student's safety and protection and therefore you cannot promise secrecy.

_____ If a student wishes to meet with you, do so in full view of other people.

_____ In the unfortunate event you suspect child abuse or have concerns about a student's behavior, actions, language or appearance. (ie: unusual bruising, poor hygiene, use of inappropriate language, stand-offish or fear of touch.) our policy is to notify the senior pastor. In an effort to protect the reputation and privacy of everyone potentially involved, we ask that only the senior pastor be notified. He/she will conduct the appropriate follow up with the District Superintendent in Lakeland.

_____ If the suspected abuser is an appointed clergy or a member of his/her family, allegations should be reported to the District Superintendent. The Senior Pastor can assist you with this process unless he/she is suspected of the abuse. In that case, the Executive Director will assist you.

Committed to the protection of the children and youth

Please check each box as you acknowledge your commitment.

- ☐ I will use positive reinforcement and communication rather than criticism, unhealthy competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth.
- ☐ I will follow the Child and Youth Protection Policy at all times and attend and complete associated training.
- ☐ I will report suspected child abuse as directed in the Child and Youth Protection Policy. I understand that failure to report suspected abuse to civil authorities is, according to the law, a misdemeanor.
- ☐ I will consult with the ministry director if I have concerns or questions regarding any part of the ministry.

Signature

Date

Email this form to [Emily Nelson](mailto:enelson@hydeparkumc.org), administrative assistant, Hyde Park United Methodist: enelson@hydeparkumc.org