

CARROLLTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

STATEMENT OF POLICY ON CHILD PROTECTION AND PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE

Jesus said, "Whoever welcomes [a] child...welcomes me" (Matthew 18:5). Children are our present and our future, our hope, our teachers, our inspiration. They are full participants in the life of the church and in the realm of God.

Jesus also said, "If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones..., it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matthew 18:6). Our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection to the little ones, the children.

God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from sexual and ritual abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong.

Carrollton Presbyterian Church, in Carrollton, GA (the "Church") remains committed to providing and maintaining a safe, nurturing environment for all children and youth under the age of eighteen while in its care during events which are sponsored or co-sponsored by the Church.

This policy is enforceable only as it relates and adheres to those policies found in the Policy and Procedures manual for CPC.

This Policy on child protection and prevention of child abuse applies to all clergy, leaders, volunteers and other persons who work with children in any paid or voluntary capacity. All children's leaders and childcare providers who regularly interact with children or youth must read, be in agreement with, and sign this policy, and affirm that they have not resigned or been terminated from a position or leadership role for reasons related to misconduct.

The Church believes that appropriate personal relationships between adult leaders (staff or volunteer) and children and youth of the Church foster the community of Christ. Common expressions of affection (hugs), affirmation (pats on the back), support (prayer) or physical caretaking (changing diapers, etc.) are appropriate in our community of caring Christians. However, adults behaving in a sexually inappropriate way during Church-sponsored activities, such as by demonstrating excessive physical expressions of affection or imposing such expressions upon another individual will not be tolerated.

It is the policy of the Church that two unrelated adults be present with children at all Church-sponsored activities. The Church recognizes that there will be times when an unaccompanied adult may be present with a group of children or youth or with a single child or youth. In those circumstances, if an adult must be alone with children or youth for a brief given time (such as Sunday school or Bible class), he/she can only do so when subject to being visually observed at all times, such as through an open door or door with window. If children and youth need to be transported it should be in groups. An unaccompanied adult will not transport children in a Church-sponsored activity.

Prohibited conduct includes any form of physical, emotional, or mental abuse of a child, including but not limited to the exploitation of a child, which breaches Christian ethical principles by misusing a trust relationship. Sexual exploitation of a child includes, but is not limited to, any interaction between a child and an adult in which the child is being used for the sexual stimulation of an adult. This may or may not include touching.

Prohibited conduct may include but not be limited to:

- Any display or demonstration of sexual activity, abuse, insinuation of abuse, or evidence of sexual conduct towards a minor;
- Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between any adult and a minor;
- Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between an older child and a younger child;
- Infliction of physically abusive behavior or bodily injury to a minor;
- Physical neglect of a minor, including failure to provide adequate supervision;
- Causing mental or emotional injury to a minor;
- Possessing obscene or pornographic (sexually explicit) materials at any function of the Church;
- Possession or being under the influence of any illegal substances;
- Consuming or being under the influence of alcohol while leading or participating in a minors' function of the Church;
- Any kind of verbal remarks with sexual connotations, overtones, or innuendo directed to or about a minor;

The first person to learn of an incident of misconduct toward a child during a Church sponsored activity (either a person witnessing or told about the incident, or the victim) should immediately report this incident to the Pastor of Carrollton Presbyterian Church. The Pastor will advise the Director of Christian Education and/or the chair of the Christian Education Team and will then seek safe sanctuary for the youth or child and shall seek such professional advice as deemed necessary and shall take appropriate steps to investigate the incident and determine whether there is any validity. Any potentially valid incident shall be reported promptly to civil authorities.

All persons involved with the report or investigation shall keep the information in strictest confidence.

Upon accusation, the accused is entitled to prompt and fair disposition of such serious charges.

It is acknowledged that Church members and ministers are subject to inquiry and discipline under the Book of Order. Physical, mental or emotional misconduct shall be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal of any Church employee, leader or childcare provider.

PARTICIPATION COVENANT FOR ALL WORKERS WITH YOUTH OR CHILDREN

In summary, the congregation of Carrollton Presbyterian Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, staff, and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church. The following policy statements reflect our congregation's commitment to preserving this church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who would enter and as a place in which all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others.

1. No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (sexual, physical, or emotional) should volunteer to work with children or youth in any church-sponsored activity.
2. All adult volunteers involved with the children or youth of our church must be at least 18 years old and must be at least 6 years older than the children they are working with.
3. All adult volunteers involved with the children or youth of our church must have been

members of the congregation for at least six months before beginning a volunteer assignment.

4. All staff and adult volunteers who work or volunteer with children or youth shall complete Stewards of Children, Darkness to Light training every three years.
5. All staff and adult volunteers who work or volunteer with children or youth shall attend regular training and educational events provided by the church to keep volunteers and staff informed of church policies and state laws regarding child abuse.
6. All staff and adult volunteers who work or volunteer with a group or children or youth shall observe the two unrelated adult rule at all times, with the exception as stated in paragraph five on page one of this policy.
7. All staff and adult volunteers who work or volunteer with children or youth shall observe the two unrelated adult rule at all times when working with *one* child or youth.
8. All staff and adult volunteers shall immediately report any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate to their supervisor.
9. All staff and adult volunteers shall not dress or undress in the presence of the children or youth they are chaperoning on trips.
10. All staff and adult volunteers will adhere to the following restroom supervision guidelines:

The exact nature of the supervision will depend on the age of the children. Following are some general guidelines.

- All staff and adult volunteers will make sure that the restroom is unoccupied before allowing children to use the facilities.
- All staff and adult volunteers will always use proper supervision when children are using public bathrooms to ensure their safety.
- All staff and adult volunteers will call on other (Darkness to Light trained) adult church members who may be “floating” from room to room to assist with restroom supervision in order to maintain the two-adult rule.
- If staff or adult volunteers are assisting younger children, doors to the facility must remain open.
- All staff and adult volunteers will stand in the restroom doorway in visual sight of another adult while children are using the restroom. This allows protection and privacy for the children and protection for the adult.
- If a toileting accident occurs, nursery staff will contact the parent(s) immediately so that the parent may address the situation.

Please answer each of the following questions:

1. Are you at least 18 years old?
 Yes No
2. As a volunteer in this congregation or as a staff member of CPC, do you agree to observe and abide by all church policies regarding working in ministries with children and youth?
 Yes No
3. As a volunteer in this congregation or as a staff member of CPC, do you agree to observe the two unrelated adult rule at all times when working with one child or youth and do you agree to observe the two unrelated adult rule when working with a group of children or youth? (With the exception as stated in paragraph 5 on page one of this document)
Yes No
4. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to abide by the six-month rule regarding membership before beginning a volunteer assignment? Yes No
5. As a volunteer in this congregation or as a staff member of CPC, do you agree to participate in training and education events provided by the church related to your work or volunteer assignment? Yes No
6. As a volunteer in this congregation or as a staff member of CPC, do you agree to report abusive or inappropriate behavior promptly to your supervisor? Yes No
7. As a volunteer in this congregation or as a staff member of CPC, do you agree to inform the Pastor of this congregation if you have ever been convicted of child abuse?
 Yes No

8. As a volunteer in this congregation or as a staff member of CPC, do you agree to submit to a background check? Yes No

I have read this Participation Covenant, and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth above. I also state that I have not been arrested or convicted of a crime involving sexual or physical abuse or misconduct as defined in this Policy Statement, or resigned from or been terminated from any position for reasons relating to sexual, physical, or mental abuse or misconduct, as defined in this Policy Statement. I hereby agree to authorize any background check the church may choose to conduct, and to sign any documents necessary.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Print applicant's full name:

Applicant's current and full address:
