



Child Safety Policy

Revised: May 2025

1. Purpose

Church of the Saviour and Heritage School are committed to the safety, welfare, and protection of all children participating in the activities and programs of this church. This policy describes standards of conduct and procedures, which are designed for the protection of children (as defined within this policy), volunteers, and staff in any program or activity sponsored or organized by Church of the Saviour and Heritage School.

Our purposes in this Policy are four-fold:

1. Jesus Christ is glorified through the protection of his people.
2. Protect children and their families.
3. Protect volunteers and staff from false accusations.
4. Safeguard the ministry of Church of the Saviour and Heritage School.

This Policy applies to all individuals, paid or non-paid, working with or around children in the above capacities. Heritage School's policy is a similar yet separate document with unique guidelines for the educational environment.

2. Definition of Terms

Throughout this policy, the following terms shall be defined as stated, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Activity" means any Church of the Saviour-sponsored event involving children. This includes, but is not limited to school, programs, camps, mission trips, Sunday school, Bible studies, and rehearsals.

"Adult" refers to any person 18 years of age or older. Within the context of Student Ministry, an adult refers to any person 18 years of age or older who is not a student participant in the high school ministry.

"Adult Volunteer for Children and Teens" ("AVCT") is defined as any adult who serves with, or alongside, children, and has been approved by the ministry leader to serve children and has received training. This individual is considered to have "direct contact with children."

"Bodily injury" means impairment of physical condition or substantial pain.

"Child" refers to any person under 18 years of age. However, within the context of Student Ministry, there may be students who participate in the high school ministry who are 18 years of age or older. Such students are covered by this policy and will be protected by the same standards, procedures, and guidelines as children. Reporting of suspected incidents for individuals over 18 years of age can be significantly different than for children and must be carefully reviewed with the Child Safety Officer (CSO).

“ChildLine” is the 24-hour child abuse reporting hotline (800-932-0313) under the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services.

“Child abuse” is defined by Federal and Pennsylvania laws (Act 108). This term means intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly doing any of the following:

- Causing bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act
- Fabricating, feigning, or intentionally exaggerating or inducing a medical symptom or disease that results in a potentially harmful medical evaluation or treatment to the child through any recent act
- Causing or substantially contributing to serious mental injury to a child through any act or failure to act or a series of such acts or failures to act
- Causing sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any act or failure to act
- Creating a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act
- Creating a likelihood of sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any recent act or failure to act
- Causing serious physical neglect of a child
- Engaging in any of the following recent acts:
 - Kicking, biting, throwing, burning, stabbing, or cutting a child in a manner that endangers the child
 - Unreasonably restraining or confining a child, based on consideration of the method, location, or the duration of the restraint or confinement
 - Forcefully shaking a child younger than age 1
 - Forcefully slapping or otherwise striking a child younger than age 1
 - Interfering with the breathing of a child
 - Causing a child to be present at a location while a violation of 18 Pa.C.S. § 7508.2 (relating to operation of methamphetamine laboratory) is occurring, provided that the violation is being investigated by law enforcement
 - Leaving a child unsupervised with an individual, other than the child’s parent, who the actor knows or reasonably should have known:
 - Is required to register as a Tier II or Tier III sexual offender under 42 Pa.C.S. Ch. 97 Subch. H (relating to registration of sexual offenders), when the victim of the sexual offense was younger than age 18 when the crime was committed
 - Has been determined to be a sexually violent predator under 42 Pa.C.S. § 9799.24 (relating to assessments) or any of its predecessors
 - Has been determined to be a sexually violent delinquent child as defined in 42 Pa.C.S § 9799.24 (relating to definitions)
- Causing the death of the child through any act or failure to act.

“Child Safety Officer” (“CSO”) is Stephen Chang, stephenc@coswayne.org, 484-584-2450.

“Child Safety Team” (“CST”) includes the Child Safety Officer, Executive Pastor, and the Senior Pastor. It will be their discretion to include the Kids Ministry Director, Next Gen Pastor, Student Ministry Pastor, Heritage School Director, Business Manager, and the Director of Operations.

“Direct Contact with Children” means the care, supervision, guidance, or control of children or routine interaction with children.

“Form CY-47” is the written report created by the state government that is filed with the county’s children and youth agency within 48 hours after making an oral report to ChildLine. Mandated reporters may submit reports online using the Pennsylvania Child Welfare Information System - Child Welfare Portal (www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis).

“Immediate Vicinity” (PA CPSL 2015) is defined as an area in which an individual is physically present with a child and can see, hear, direct, and assess the activities of the child.

“Mandated Reporter” is an individual paid or unpaid who, on the basis of the individual’s role as an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity or service, is a person responsible for the child’s welfare or has direct contact with children.

“Ministry Leader” refers to the staff positions of pastor, director, or coordinator who are responsible for leading the ministries of the church.

“Misconduct” is wrongful, improper, or unlawful conduct or endangering the welfare of a child.

- Examples of inappropriate conduct include, but are not limited to:
 - Lengthy embraces.
 - Touching genital areas other than for appropriate diapering or toileting of infants and toddlers.
 - Massages.
 - Kissing
 - Any physical/sexual harassment.
 - Having children who are preschoolers or older sitting on their lap.
- Examples of appropriate conduct:
 - Pats on the shoulder.
 - High fives and handshakes.
 - Holding hands while walking with small children or children with disabilities.
 - Holding hands during prayer.
 - Side hugs.

“Neglect” means the prolonged or repeated lack of supervision or the failure to provide essentials of life, including adequate medical care, that endangers a child’s life or development or impairs a child’s functioning. This is included in the term child abuse.

“One-on-one meeting” means a face-to-face interaction between an AVCT and a child. This includes driving in a vehicle with a child.

“PA CPSL” refers to the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Laws.

“Reasonable cause to suspect” is more than a hunch, but based on knowledge of circumstances, observations, and familiarity with the individuals involved.

“Routine interaction” is defined as scheduled at least one time per month.

“Serious bodily injury” means bodily injury that creates a substantial risk of death or causes serious permanent disfigurement or protracted loss or impairment of function of any bodily member or organ.

“Serious mental injury” means a psychological condition, as diagnosed by a physician or licensed psychologist, including the refusal of appropriate treatment that renders a child chronically and severely anxious, agitated, depressed, socially withdrawn, psychotic or in reasonable fear that his

or her life or safety is threatened and seriously interferes with a child's ability to accomplish age-appropriate development and social tasks.

“Serious physical injury” means an injury that causes a child severe pain or significantly impairs a child's physical functioning, either temporarily or permanently.

“Serious physical neglect” means any of the following when committed by a perpetrator that endangers a child's life or health, threatens a child's well-being, causes bodily injury, or impairs a child's health, development or functioning:

- A repeated, prolonged, or egregious failure to supervise a child in a manner that is appropriate considering the child's developmental age and abilities.
- The failure to provide a child with adequate essentials of life, including food, shelter, or medical care.

“Sexual abuse or exploitation” means any of the following:

- The employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of a child to engage in or assist another individual to engage in sexually explicit conduct, which includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Looking at the sexual or other intimate parts of a child or another individual for the purpose of arousing or gratifying sexual desire in any individual.
 - Participating in sexually explicit conversation either in person, by telephone, by computer or by a computer-aided device for the purpose of sexual stimulation or gratification of any individual.
 - Actual or simulated sexual activity or nudity for the purpose of sexual stimulation or gratification of any individual.
 - Actual or simulated sexual activity for the purpose of producing visual depiction, including photographing, videotaping, computer depicting or filming. This paragraph does not include consensual activities between a child who is 14 years of age or older and another person who is 14 years of age or older and whose age is within four years of the child's age.
- Any of the following offenses committed against a child:
 - Rape
 - Statutory sexual assault
 - Involuntary deviate sexual intercourse
 - Sexual assault
 - Institutional sexual assault
 - Aggravated indecent assault
 - Indecent assault
 - Indecent exposure
 - Incest
 - Prostitution
 - Sexual abuse
 - Unlawful contact with a child
 - Sexual exploitation

“Youth Volunteer for Children and Teens” (“YVCT”) is defined as a child who has been approved by the ministry leader to serve children and has received training.

3. **Standards for conduct, character, and activities associated with Church of the Saviour:**

1. To have two (2) unrelated AVCTs in the immediate vicinity at all activities (a.k.a. "Two-Adult Rule").
2. All AVCTs and YVCTs should avoid questionable or inappropriate physical contact with children. Care should be taken that physical expressions of affection are not excessive or imposed upon another.
3. Training in preventing, identifying, and reporting abuse is required for all AVCTs and YVCTs.
4. All YVCTs will be supervised by the Ministry Leader or a designated AVCT who will remain in the immediate vicinity.
5. Ministry Leader approval and notification are required before planning any meetings outside of regular programming.
6. Grooming behaviors beyond sexual abuse by AVCTs or YVCTs such as excessive gift-giving, secret communication, or favoritism are strictly prohibited.
7. To maintain a safe and respectful environment, any AVCT or YVCT must adhere to the following dating policy:
 - a. **Minimum Waiting Period:** Both AVCTs and YVCTs must observe a minimum waiting period of 3 years after the child they served has graduated from high school before entering into a dating relationship.
 - b. **Purpose:** This dating policy is in place to prevent any potential conflicts of interest, power dynamics, or perceived exploitation that may arise from such relationships. Any such future relationship must be disclosed to the Ministry Leader, even after the waiting period.

4. **Language, Discipline and Boundary Expectations**

All AVCTs and YVCTs are expected to uphold the highest standards of respect, care, and professionalism when interacting with children. This includes setting appropriate boundaries and modeling Christ-like behavior in all verbal and non-verbal communication. The following guidelines are to be strictly observed:

- **Language:** Volunteers and staff must use positive, encouraging, and respectful language at all times. The use of profanity, sarcasm, ridicule, or threatening language toward children is strictly prohibited.
- **Discipline:** Physical discipline is not permitted under any circumstances. If a child's behavior requires intervention, only age-appropriate, non-physical methods such as redirection, time-outs (when appropriate), or involving a Ministry Leader may be used. All discipline must be fair, consistent, and never administered out of anger.
- **Non-Physical Boundary Violations:** Volunteers and staff must avoid behaviors that may confuse, manipulate, or exploit the trust of a child. These include but are not limited to:
 - Sharing personal or inappropriate details about one's own life.
 - Singling out a child for special attention or favoritism.
 - Keeping secrets with or from a child.
 - Joking or commenting inappropriately about topics of a sexual, violent, or adult nature.
 - Engaging in any conduct that may create emotional dependency or undermine a child's relationship with their parents or guardians.

If any AVCT or YVCT becomes unsure whether an interaction might be inappropriate or perceived as such, they should consult the Ministry Leader or CSO immediately for guidance.

5. **Standards for Meetings Outside of Regular Programming (Virtual and In-Person):**

1. All meetings, whether virtual or in person, must include at least two unrelated AVCTs present.
2. As a standard practice, one-on-one meetings between AVCTs and children are not permitted. In the case where a one-on-one meeting is deemed necessary:

- a. Written parental consent must be obtained in advance, and the Ministry Leader must be informed and provide oversight. If a Ministry Leader is meeting one on one with a minor, they must notify their direct supervisor.
3. AVCTs may not engage in one-on-one direct messaging with children through text, email, social media, gaming platforms, apps, or phone. All communication must occur in public or group settings to maintain transparency and accountability. If an individual message is deemed necessary, AVCTs must inform the Ministry Leader of any such communication and the Ministry Leader shall document the communication.

6. Standards that apply for overnight church events:

1. There will never be only 1 AVCT alone in a sleeping quarter with one or more children. If there are AVCTs in the same sleeping quarters as one or more children, there must be two (2) unrelated AVCTs present in the immediate vicinity in each sleeping quarter.
2. During overnight events, opposite genders must sleep in different sleeping quarters, and everyone must have his or her own sleeping space. Opposite genders should not enter the sleeping quarters at any time.
3. AVCTs should never shower with or change clothes in the presence of children.
4. Use "buddy systems" for children when going to bathrooms.

7. Qualifications

All AVCTs and YVCTs must be approved by the Ministry Leader to serve with children. This approval process includes, but is not limited to:

1. Completion of a ministry volunteer application, updated over time, as required.
2. Signed acknowledgment of this Policy (ie. COS Child Safety Policy).
3. If 18 years of age or older, submission of clearances, in the same form as received, to the Business Manager prior to serving in a volunteer position:
 - Residents of Pennsylvania must submit the following Pennsylvania required clearances to the, and to submit to such clearances every sixty (60) months:
 1. PA Criminal Record Check (PA State Police).
 2. PA Child Abuse History Clearance.
 3. FBI Criminal History Clearance (fingerprint based).
Adults who have been residents of Pennsylvania for the previous consecutive ten (10) years prior to volunteering may utilize a notarized affidavit in lieu of the FBI Criminal Clearance based on fingerprints.
 4. Act 31 approved Mandated Reporter Training every 5 years.
 - Non-residents of Pennsylvania or those who have resided in Pennsylvania for less than twenty-four (24) months will be required to submit to a national criminal background check and/or similar clearances as required by Pennsylvania.

8. Driving Children in Vehicles

1. Any individual who is driving children for a Church of the Saviour sanctioned activity must have a driver's license background check through the Business Manager.
2. There must be two unrelated AVCTs present in any vehicle when providing transportation for a Church of the Saviour sanctioned activity.
3. For pick-up and drop off to and from COS sanctioned activities, one AVCT can drive children to or from a COS sanctioned activity if the following conditions apply:
 - a. One or more of their own children are in the vehicle.

- b. Written permission has been obtained from the parents of all children in the vehicle and parents are aware of other adults that may be present in the vehicle. Documentation of this permission will be on file with the Ministry Leader.

9. Information Privacy about Children

Church of the Saviour will not post, publish, or share information about a child to the public in any media, forum, electronic media, social media, or in print that could cause a child to be personally identified. Only one piece of information (i.e., photo, name, etc.) about a child can be displayed at once. Name tags/lanyards must not be visible when taking pictures.

Within the church body there are exceptions to this policy such as:

- During a baptism or dedication in front of the church body with parental permission.
- In Realm database which is only accessible to those with Realm accounts at Church of the Saviour.

10. Oversight of Children

Children not immediately involved in a church-sponsored activity are to be attended to by a parent or guardian at all times when on the Church of the Saviour campus.

11. Reporting Violations, and Procedures

In the event of an incident occurring within the United States or regarding a U.S. citizen on an international missions trip:

1. Any person learning of an incident of suspected abuse toward a child should immediately report the incident to ChildLine at 800-932-0313 or submit an online report at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis. This includes any disclosures made during any program or activity on campus at Church of the Saviour or a sponsored event of Church of the Saviour.
2. After the call is made, the Child Safety Officer (CSO) is to be contacted and informed of the report, barring the CSO is not the accused party.
3. Within forty-eight (48) hours of a call to ChildLine, Form CY-47 must be submitted to Child Services by the person making the report. A copy of Form CY-47 or online submission will be retained by the CSO in a confidential, locked file, or a secure electronic location.
4. The CSO will be available by phone or in person to collaborate with the person who suspects the abuse to offer support to ensure the child's safety and expedient care.
5. In the event of misconduct or suspected abuse by any persons, the CSO and/or the Ministry Leader involved will personally secure the safety of the child. The child will not be left without safe supervision while reporting the incident, until it has been determined that he or she is going to a safe environment, any necessary reports have been made, and any appropriate authorities have been notified.
6. The CSO and/or the Ministry Leader will communicate with parent(s) or guardian(s) of the victim(s) at his or her discretion, based on securing the safety of the child.

12. Additional Points:

1. Pending the outcome of an investigation, all information pertaining to the alleged incident will be kept in the strictest confidence by all persons involved with the report or investigation. All written documents regarding incidents of abuse will be kept in a locked file in the church office.
2. Church of the Saviour will fully cooperate with any investigation by the authorities.
3. The CST, on behalf of the church, will be responsible for determining how external communication will be handled regarding an incident of alleged misconduct or abuse.
4. In the event of an incident occurring during a church-sponsored activity away from the church facility, the same procedure listed above should be followed to the extent practicable.

13. Consequences of Violation:

1. The CSO will consult closely with the CST to determine what is best to fulfill the purposes of this Policy.
2. After completion of the investigation by the CST, any person found to have engaged in misconduct will be subject to an additional investigation and discipline by the Elder Board.

14. Annual Review Clause:

This Child Safety Policy must be reviewed annually by the CST and updated as needed.



Child Safety Policy Acknowledgement

Revised: May 2025

This statement is to acknowledge that I have read and agree to adhere to this Child Safety Policy. I understand that it is my responsibility to understand, become familiar with and comply with the guidelines that have been established, and to seek clarification, if necessary, from the Ministry Leader under whom I serve.

Signature

Date

Print Name

If you are acknowledging as a minor, please have your parent or official guardian sign as well:

Signature

Date

Return signature page to:
Church of the Saviour
Attn: Business Manager
651 North Wayne Avenue
Wayne, PA 19087