

GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP OF SUSSEX

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



SEE THAT YOU DO NOT DESPISE ONE OF THESE LITTLE ONES.
FOR I TELL YOU THAT IN HEAVEN THEIR ANGELS ALWAYS SEE
THE FACE OF MY FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN.
MATTHEW 18:10

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GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP OF SUSSEX (HEREAFTER "GFS") HAS A WIDE VARIETY OF PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH RANGING FROM NURSERY TO HIGH SCHOOL. THE PURPOSE OF EACH PROGRAM IS TO INTRODUCE THE CHILDREN IN OUR CARE TO THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

GFS SEEKS TO PROVIDE A SAFE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH WHO PARTICIPATE IN OUR PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES. BY IMPLEMENTING THE PRACTICES BELOW, OUR GOAL IS TO PROTECT THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH OF GFS FROM INCIDENTS OF ABUSE, MISCONDUCT, OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR WHILE ALSO PROTECTING OUR PAID STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS FROM FALSE ACCUSATIONS. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT ALL GFS PAID STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS UNDERSTAND AND IMPLEMENT THESE GUIDELINES TO HELP PREVENT ABUSE AGAINST CHILDREN.

PURPOSE

These procedures are designed to reduce the risk of child abuse by:

- ❖ Providing a safe, secure environment for everyone involved including children, youth, parents, paid staff and volunteer staff.
- ❖ Assisting GFS in evaluating a person's suitability to supervise and oversee activities of children and youth by providing a screening process for paid staff and volunteers.
- ❖ Reducing the potential for false accusations of any form of abuse made against volunteers and paid staff, as well as the elimination of any actual abuse.
- ❖ Providing a system to respond to alleged victims of abuse and their families, as well as the alleged perpetrator, and providing a system to report potential abuse or inappropriate behavior.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all GFS-sponsored Children & Youth programs and activities both on and off premises. It does not apply to programs and activities not sponsored by GFS. This policy also pertains to interactions and activities prior to and immediately after programs sponsored by GFS. While it is not directly the responsibility of paid staff or volunteers to oversee activities prior to or following these events, it is strongly encouraged that parents be aware, guide, and instruct their children on proper behaviors and interactions prior to and following activities sponsored by GFS.

DEFINITIONS

The following terms are used herein and defined as follows:

- ❖ **Paid Staff/Employee:** Any pastor, minister, preacher, or employee who is paid by GFS.
- ❖ **Children/Youth/Minor/Student:** Any person who has not reached his/her 18th birthday or the age of majority as defined by state law. Classrooms are assigned based on birthdate using September 1st as the cutoff.
- ❖ **Adult:** A person who has reached his/her 18th birthday or age of majority as defined by state law. In the case of a senior in high school who has reached this age, they would be considered Adult status in relation to the Child Protection Policy.
- ❖ **Worker/Leader/Teacher:** (Hereafter “Workers”) Any paid or unpaid person engaged or involved in activities and who is entrusted with the care and supervision of minors, or a person who directly oversees and/or exerts control or oversight over minors or adults. Teachers are specifically designated to teach and educate minors and adults, and must be members in good standing with GFS.
- ❖ **Youth Assistant:** Any paid or unpaid minor who assists in the care and supervision of minors. Youth Assistants must be entering 7th grade and at least 12 years of age. They must also be at least two years older than the oldest individual in the ministry with which they are working.

- ❖ **Designated Authorities:** The person(s) assigned by GFS Elders to handle all reports related to the Child Protection Policy.
- ❖ **MinistrySafe:** Describes the online company which administers and stores the information for the sexual abuse awareness training, background checks, applications for service, and screening records.

SCREENING PROCEDURES

All persons who desire to work with GFS children and youth will be screened. This includes adults, minors, or students who only desire to help out “once in a while.” This will help us maintain a safe environment. Screening includes the following and is subject to ongoing checks:

- ❖ **Sexual Abuse Awareness Training:** No applicant will be considered for any position involving contact with minors until he/she has completed the Sexual Abuse Awareness Training through MinistrySafe. This training will be renewed every three (3) years. For those applying as Youth Assistants, parents are encouraged to watch the videos with their students, using parental discretion as needed.
- ❖ **Six Month Rule:** No applicant will be considered for any position involving contact with minors until he/she has been a member or regular attender of GFS for a minimum of six (6) months. Exceptions may be granted by the Elders. Any exceptions will be noted in Elder meeting minutes.
- ❖ **Written Application:** All persons seeking to work with minors must complete and sign a written Ministry Application (Appendix A or A.1). This application will be checked by a designated authority prior to ministry service. All screening documentation will be maintained in confidence at GFS. Designated authorities consist of Elders, specified leaders of areas of ministry, and assigned leaders/helpers by those specified leaders.
- ❖ **Personal Interview:** A face-to-face interview with all new applicants will be scheduled with a GFS ministry leader and another designated authority of the church to discuss suitability for the position. In the case of minors, the presence of a parent would be requested.
- ❖ **Criminal Background Check:** A background check is required for all employees (regardless of position) and for all adult volunteers. On rare occasions, a background check may be required for minors. Background checks will be overseen and requested by the specified ministry leaders.

Any person who has been convicted of child abuse (sexual, physical, and/or emotional), or is a convicted sex offender, will not be allowed to work with minors in any church-sponsored event. GFS also reserves the discretion to deny any person the opportunity to work or volunteer based upon past criminal convictions, not merely those related to abuse or sexual offense. Failure to disclose a criminal conviction, accusation or charge on the application will also be a disqualifying event.

The Authorization For Criminal Background Check (Appendix A and A.1) and results will be maintained in confidence at GFS. All Criminal Background Checks will be updated every five (5) years. Administration of background checks will be overseen by MinistrySafe. The director of the ministry or individuals the director delegates will be responsible for the background checks and application process.

- ❖ **Driver Clearance:** All drivers of minors must be at least 21 years of age, have a valid driver's license, and current auto insurance. GFS is only responsible for drivers of minors during GFS sponsored activities. Any consent given for any other event or occasion is at the discretion and agreement of the parents and that driver.

SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Adequate and appropriate supervision by screened and trained staff and volunteers is required to ensure the safety of the program participants and to maintain a viable learning environment. Responsibility for adhering to these guidelines resides with the GFS ministry leader. Teachers and assistants are expected to support and be aware of these guidelines. GFS will follow these preferred staffing policies and procedures:

- ❖ **Two Worker Rule:** Minimum supervisory standards will include the Two-Worker Rule. The Two-Worker Rule requires that no matter the size of the group or the setting, there will always be at least two workers present, one of whom must be an adult and ideally unrelated.

Exceptions to the Two Worker Rule:

- ♦ **Transportation:** Adult workers may transport minors to and from GFS-sponsored events if consent has been obtained electronically at the time of registration for participation in the Children and Youth ministry programs, provided there are two or more minors present in the vehicle. For the protection of all, workers should never be alone in a car with a minor unless an exception has been granted by the Elders or designated authorities. Informal arrangements made by parents are not within the scope of these policy recommendations.
 - ♦ **Restroom Use:** One adult female worker may escort minors to the restroom provided she is never alone with a child in a restroom with the door closed or in a restroom stall with a closed door. (See "Restroom Guidelines" in the age-specific policies & procedures).
 - ♦ **High School Small Groups:** One adult leader may meet with two or more unrelated high school students of the same sex in approved space at GFS.
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- ❖ **Open Door Policy:** Classroom doors should remain open unless there is a window in the door or beside it.
 - ❖ **Visitors:** It is permissible for a parent to join his/her child in the child's classroom, even if that parent is not an approved child care worker. While in the room, a parent should limit his/her interaction to his/her own child. He/She may engage in conversation with other children, but he/she should be focused primarily on his/her own child. Please inform the children's ministry coordinator when there is a

visitor in the classroom.

- ❖ **Counseling:** In cases where an adult has a legitimate reason to be alone with a child (e.g. counseling a minor where discretion is required), he/she will obtain written consent from the minor's parent or guardian prior to being alone with the minor (obtained electronically at the time of registration for participation in the Children and Youth ministry programs) and notify another adult of the location and with whom he/she is meeting. Counseling should be done in a public place where private conversations are possible but occur in full or partial view of others. Male adults must counsel male youth and children; female adults must counsel female youth and children. A male/female team is generally appropriate for counseling either gender.
- ❖ **Unaccompanied Minors:** GFS is not responsible or liable for unsupervised minors during times outside of GFS sponsored activities. It is the responsibility of the parents to manage and be aware of their children's whereabouts and behaviors prior to and following worship service times and other GFS sponsored activities.
- ❖ **Ministry Guidelines:** Each ministry department will develop age appropriate guidelines created to meet their unique requirements. These guidelines will be in accord with this protection policy and will be reviewed and approved by the Elders.
- ❖ **Sex Offenders:** All persons with past histories of sexual offenses will be asked to sign a *Limited Access Agreement* (Appendix C) and a *Consent, Authorization, and Release form* (Appendix D). An offender who refuses to sign should know that if he/she enters the church or its property, he/she will be asked to leave.
- ❖ **Discipline:** It is the policy of GFS that staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any way for behavior management of children or students. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behavior by a student(s). If a student is unruly or fails to comply with verbal warnings or instructions from staff/volunteers, that student will be asked to leave (if not endangered by doing so) or the student's parent will be contacted to pick up the student. In the

event of a fight or a physical altercation, staff/volunteer will verbally redirect students involved and will try to avoid physical intervention. Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported immediately to parents and the designated ministry leader.

- ❖ **Intoxicants:** Staff and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while in any GFS facility, while traveling with students, or while working with or supervising students in any GFS sponsored activities or events.
- ❖ **Nudity:** Staff and volunteers should never be nude in the presence of students in their care. In the event there is a situation that may call for the possibility of nudity (i.e. changing clothes during a pool party, weekend or overnight retreat, etc), the staff member/volunteer will submit a plan to the Elders or ministry leaders over the specific ministry concerning arrangements for showering or changing clothes.
- ❖ **Displays of Affection:** Touch is an essential part of nurturing and should be age and developmentally appropriate. Be aware of and sensitive to differences in sexual development, cultural differences, family backgrounds, individual personalities, and special needs. Staff members, ministry leaders, and volunteers must agree and adhere to these standards at all times. This will be re-emphasized at the time of application for service in this ministry. Any display of affection must be immediately ended at the first sign of the minor's dislike or any perceived discomfort. The following guidelines are to be promoted for pure, genuine, and positive displays of God's love:
 - ♦ **HUGS:** A one-arm side hug is an appropriate display of affection. Avoid initiating full contact, body-to-body hugs, or kisses.
 - ♦ **LAP SITTING:** Sitting on laps is appropriate for children 3 and younger. Do not encourage lap-sitting with school-aged children; rather, encourage them to sit next to you.
 - ♦ **CASUAL TOUCH:** Gentle contact during activities may be on children's heads, shoulders, arms and hands.
 - ♦ **BACK RUBS:** Anyone working with our children should not give back rubs. This behavior may easily be misinterpreted.

- ♦ **TICKLING:** Tickling can be a warm, engaging and playful action and can also be used to help get a child out of a sour mood. However, this can be misinterpreted by some or unwelcome by the child. Please use discretion and limit this action to children ages 3 and younger.

- ❖ **Inappropriate Touching:** Touching a child's private areas or the clothing covering those areas and all other forms of child sexual abuse are strictly prohibited. The only exception is the necessary hygienic care for infants or toddlers.

RECOGNIZING CHILD ABUSE

According to the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, hereafter WDCF, “Child abuse” is the mistreatment of a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caretaker, someone living in their home, or someone who works with or around children. The mistreatment must cause injury or put the child at risk of physical injury. Child abuse can be physical (such as burns or broken bones), sexual (such as fondling or incest), or emotional. Neglect happens when there is failure, refusal or inability on the part of a caregiver, for reasons other than poverty, to provide necessary care, food, clothing, medical or dental care or shelter so as to seriously endanger the physical health of the child.

Prior to serving all staff and volunteers are instructed in recognizing the signs of abuse and are trained to report suspected or reported abuse to a staff member and the appropriate authorities. For more information visit the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (WDCF).

Reporting Suspected Abuse

GFS has zero tolerance for abuse in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every staff member and volunteer at GFS to act in the best interest of students in every program.

If you are a volunteer and suspect or learn of inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervisions, poor role-modeling, etc.), or suspect child abuse (physical, emotional, and sexual) or neglect, you must immediately report this to two individuals. These individuals may be a GFS ministry leader and a staff member or Elder. If necessary, a written report will be forwarded to WDCF and if it is determined that the child is in any type of danger, WDCF will be contacted immediately (Incident Report, Appendix D). Contact information for WDCF is on the following page.

If you are an employee of GFS and you are responsible for the care of children, you are considered a mandated reporter. As such, you are required by the State of Wisconsin to report child abuse to the WDCF and file a report.

REPORTING ABUSE DURING CHURCH MINISTRY

THE PROCESS OF HANDLING AN INCIDENT

1. A quick, compassionate, objective, immediate, and unified response to an alleged incident of child abuse is expected. Allegations must be taken seriously by designated authorities and in accordance with state law. A report will also be made to the police department, Child Protective Services, or another appropriate agency.
2. No accused will be addressed by anyone other than the designated authorities until the safety of the minor or victim is secured. Immediate steps must also be taken to ensure that the alleged perpetrator is not left alone with minors.
3. The parent/guardian of the child will be notified by a designated authority immediately.
4. The accused perpetrator should be treated with dignity, not confronted with anger or hostility. He/She will be relieved temporarily of his/her duties until the investigation is completed.
5. A written record of the incident as well as steps and actions taken will be kept (Appendix D).
6. All details, interviews, and information will remain confidential to those legitimately involved in the investigation. Any individual or group of individuals responsible for a breach in this confidentiality is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination from their position.
7. No victim or individual involved in an allegation or anyone responsible for investigating an allegation will be retaliated against.
8. If the accused is cleared of all allegations, he/she will be reinstated to his/her position at the discretion of the Elders. Everyone within the organization who was told of the investigation will be informed of the same.
9. If abuse is confirmed, the accused will be dismissed from his/her position with cause.

10. Pastoral support will be available to all persons involved with the incident as indicated. Appropriate specialized counseling will also be made available to the victim of child abuse and his/her family as well as to the alleged offender and his/her family.

WDCF CONTACT INFORMATION:

Department of Children and Families
201 West Washington Avenue
P.O. Box 8916
Madison, WI 53703-8916
Main Contact Telephone Number: 608-422-7000
Fax: 608-422-7163
Email: dcfweb@wisconsin.gov

REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE OUTSIDE OF CHURCH MINISTRY

THE PROCESS OF HANDLING AN INCIDENT

1. If abuse is suspected to be occurring outside of Church Ministry times, the worker or assistant will communicate to the designated authorities their concerns.
2. If the designated authorities, workers, or assistants have reasonable suspicion that abuse is occurring outside of ministry time, the designated authorities will walk the worker or assistant through the process of reporting to the police department, Child Protective Services, or another appropriate agency if deemed necessary.

This process will also be followed in the event of suspected abuse related to a child attending a GFS sponsored event even if the child is not affiliated with the church (ex: a community member attending VBS).

ONGOING TRAINING & EDUCATION

An annual refresher of the CPP is a requirement for every GFS staff member, Elder, and approved volunteer working with children and youth. New employees and volunteers will be required to read the Child Protection Policy.

CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

The membership of the Child Protection Committee shall not exceed seven (7) members and shall include a minimum of one Elder, the youth and children's ministry leaders, and at least one, but not more than three other person/s they deem appropriate. At least one member must be a female. The Child Protection Committee shall annually review and propose any revisions to this policy and shall be responsible for the administration and interpretations of this policy. They will manage and oversee the Child Protection Policy in the following areas:

- ◆ Annual Policy Updates
- ◆ Screening Procedures review
- ◆ Orientation
- ◆ Annual CPP Refresher
- ◆ Coordination with MinistrySafe to maintain appropriate documentation
- ◆ Serve as "Designated Authorities" for the purpose of reporting
- ◆ Assist with crisis management when allegations are made
- ◆ Be available for interviews/evaluations on an as needed basis

EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY

Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Elders.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY POLICY & PROCEDURES

AGES 6 WEEKS – 23 MONTHS

All staff and volunteer workers will adhere to the GFS Child Protection Policy at all times.

REGISTRATION

Proper parental/guardian consent and medical release forms for minor's participation in all GFS Children and Youth (hereafter "C&Y") ministry programs must be obtained and documented electronically at the time of registration.

STAFFING RATIOS

When nursery is open the Two Worker Rule (see "Safety Policies and Procedures") will be maintained at all times. A ratio of two approved workers to no more than six minors (2:6) shall apply.

SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

In order to show love to one another and to help bear the burden of the ministry, members or regular attenders who consistently make use of the nursery ministry for their children will be required to serve a minimum of one (1) Sunday per month. If necessary due to a lack of volunteers an additional Sunday may be required, but will not exceed two (2) Sundays per month. Any exceptions require Elder approval.

AGE/GENDER GUIDELINES

- ♦ At least one adult female worker will be present.

YOUTH ASSISTANT PRE-SCREENING GUIDELINES

A youth assistant may assist in GFS children's ministry programs as long as he/she is approved by the children's ministry coordinator, has completed a personal interview, a Ministry Application (Appendix A.1), and the "Sexual Abuse Awareness Training" (through MinistrySafe). He/She must be under the supervision of an approved adult worker (ideally unrelated) and must not be left alone with minors. Any exceptions require Elder approval.

CHECK IN/CHECK OUT

A parent/guardian will be required to check-in their child at the self check-in location before each service/program. Visitors or parents/guardians in need of assistance can visit the Welcome Center or see the children's ministry coordinator. A name tag for each child will print along with a pickup tag. The name tag should be affixed to the child's back before checking the child into the nursery, and the parent/guardian will keep the pickup tag. At the nursery door the parent/guardian will be asked to leave appropriate instructions for the child's care. A text will be sent to the parent's/guardian's cell phone if any needs arise for the child. The pickup tag should be shown to the nursery room supervisor when picking up a child. Children should be picked up at the appropriate end time and should be picked up by a parent or guardian.

RESTROOM GUIDELINES

- ♦ **Diaper Changing:** Diaper changing should be done at designated diapering stations in the nursery by adult females only, unless the adult is the child's parent. Diaper changing should be done in full or partial view of others.
- ♦ **Potty Training:** If the child is potty training, parents are strongly encouraged to take their child to the restroom prior to drop off. If a child needs to use the restroom a parent or guardian will be contacted.

EMERGENCY AND SICK CHILD PROCEDURES

In cases of emergency or sickness the nursery volunteer will contact the ministry leader. The ministry leader or nursery volunteer will determine if the child's parent/guardian should be contacted to have the child removed from the nursery. Decisions about medical care will be left to the judgment of the parent/guardian.

Children with the following symptoms within the last 24 hours should NOT be dropped off:

- ♦ Nausea
- ♦ Diarrhea
- ♦ Vomiting
- ♦ Difficulty breathing, persistent or productive cough
- ♦ Fever
- ♦ Runny nose with green or yellow discharge
- ♦ Lethargic demeanor

- ◆ Inability to participate in activities
- ◆ Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- ◆ Infected skin or eyes or an undiagnosed rash
- ◆ Severe itching of body or scalp
- ◆ Any unstated and known symptoms or suspected communicable/infectious disease

DISCIPLINE

Discipline should be carried out through instruction, training, and correction in a fair, firm, and consistent manner. Physical discipline will not be used by anyone other than the child's parents. For additional information please see page 9.

LIST OF APPROVED WORKERS/YOUTH ASSISTANTS

The children's ministry coordinator or nursery coordinator will maintain and regularly update a list of approved workers for the nursery that shall be referenced prior to scheduling workers or making any substitutions.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY POLICY & PROCEDURES

AGE 2-3 YEARS

All staff and volunteer workers will adhere to the GFS Child Protection Policy at all times.

REGISTRATION

Proper parental/guardian consent and medical release forms for minor's participation in all GFS Children and Youth (hereafter "C&Y") ministry programs must be obtained and documented electronically at the time of registration.

STAFFING RATIOS

When classrooms are open the Two Worker Rule (see "Safety Policies and Procedures") will be maintained at all times. A ratio of two approved workers to no more than twelve minors (2:12) shall apply.

YOUTH ASSISTANT PRE-SCREENING GUIDELINES

A youth assistant may assist in GFS children's ministry programs as long as he/she is approved by the children's ministry coordinator, has completed a personal interview, a Ministry Application (Appendix A.1), and the "Sexual Abuse Awareness Training" (through MinistrySafe). He/She must be under the supervision of an approved adult worker (ideally unrelated) and must not be left alone with minors. Any exceptions require Elder approval.

CHECK IN/CHECK OUT

A parent/guardian will be required to check-in their child at the self check-in location before each service/program. Visitors or parents/guardians in need of assistance can visit the Welcome Center or see the children's ministry coordinator. A name tag for each child will be printed along with a pickup tag. The name tag should be affixed to the child's back before checking the child into the classroom, and the parent/guardian will keep the pickup tag. At the door to the classroom the parent/guardian will be asked to leave appropriate instructions for the child's care. A text will be sent to the parent's/guardian's cell phone if any needs arise for the child. The pickup tag should be shown to the Worker when picking up their child. Children should be picked up at the appropriate end time and should be picked up by a parent or guardian.

RESTROOM GUIDELINES

Parents are strongly encouraged to take their child(ren) to the restroom prior to class. If a child needs to use the restroom during class, a parent or guardian will be contacted. If the parent is unable to be reached, then an approved worker should escort the child to the family restroom. The worker will first screen the restroom to determine if it is currently in use. Whenever possible the worker should wait until the restroom is empty before sending a child in or utilize another restroom. While the child uses the restroom the worker will remain outside the restroom in the hallway with the door propped open and wait for the child. If a child is taking longer than seems necessary the worker should call the child's name. If a child requires assistance the worker should discreetly leave the stall door open as the child is assisted. For the protection of all, ministry workers should never be alone with a child in a restroom with the door closed or in a closed restroom stall with a child.

EMERGENCY AND SICK CHILD PROCEDURES

In cases of emergency or sickness, an adult leader will contact the children's ministry coordinator. The children's ministry coordinator or worker will determine if the child's parent/guardian should be contacted to have their child removed from the classroom. Decisions about medical care will be left to the judgment of the parent/guardian.

Children with the following symptoms within the last 24 hours should NOT be dropped off:

- ◆ Nausea
- ◆ Diarrhea
- ◆ Vomiting
- ◆ Difficulty breathing, persistent or productive cough
- ◆ Fever
- ◆ Runny nose with green or yellow discharge
- ◆ Lethargic demeanor
- ◆ Inability to participate in activities
- ◆ Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- ◆ Infected skin or eyes or an undiagnosed rash
- ◆ Severe itching of body or scalp
- ◆ Any unstated and known symptoms or suspected communicable/infectious disease

DISCIPLINE

Discipline should be carried out through instruction, training, and correction in a fair, firm and consistent manner. Physical discipline will not be used by anyone other than the child's parents. For additional information please see page 9.

LIST OF APPROVED WORKERS

The children's ministry coordinator will maintain and regularly update a list of approved workers for the C&Y Ministries that shall be referenced prior to scheduling workers or making any substitutions.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY POLICY & PROCEDURES

GRADES K4 - 6

All staff and volunteer workers will adhere to the GFS Child Protection Policy at all times.

REGISTRATION

Proper parental/guardian consent and medical release forms for minor's participation in all GFS Children and Youth (hereafter "C&Y") ministry programs must be obtained and documented electronically at the time of registration.

STAFFING RATIOS

When classrooms are open the Two Worker Rule (see "Safety Policies and Procedures") will be maintained at all times. During all GFS C&Y ministry programs, a ratio of two approved workers to no more than twenty-five (2:25) minors shall apply.

YOUTH ASSISTANT PRE-SCREENING GUIDELINES

A youth assistant may assist in GFS children's ministry programs as long as he/she is approved by the children's ministry coordinator, has completed a personal interview, a Ministry Application (Appendix A.1), and the "Sexual Abuse Awareness Training" (through MinistrySafe). He/She must be under the supervision of an approved adult worker (ideally unrelated) and must not be left alone with minors. Any exceptions require Elder approval.

CHECK IN/CHECK OUT

A parent/guardian will be required to check-in their child at the self check-in location before each service/program. Visitors or parents/guardians in need of assistance can visit the Welcome Center or see the children's ministry coordinator. A name tag for each child will be printed along with a pickup tag. The name tag should be affixed to the child before checking the child into the classroom, and the parent/guardian will keep the pickup tag. At the door to the classroom the parent/guardian will be asked to leave appropriate instructions for the child's care. A text will be sent to the parent's/guardian's cell phone if any needs arise for the child. The pickup tag should be shown to the Worker when picking up their child. Children should be picked up at the appropriate end time and should be picked up by a parent or guardian.

RESTROOM GUIDELINES

Parents are strongly encouraged to take their child(ren) to the restroom prior to class. For the protection of all, workers should never be alone with a child in a restroom with the door closed or in a closed restroom stall with a child. The child should use the restroom closest to the classroom.

EMERGENCY AND SICK CHILD PROCEDURES

In cases of emergency or sickness a worker will contact the children's ministry coordinator. The children's ministry coordinator or worker will determine if the child's parent/guardian should be contacted to have their child removed from the classroom. Decisions about medical care will be left to the judgment of the parent/guardian.

Children with the following symptoms within the last 24 hours should NOT be dropped off:

- ◆ Nausea
- ◆ Diarrhea
- ◆ Vomiting
- ◆ Difficulty breathing, persistent or productive cough
- ◆ Fever
- ◆ Runny nose with green or yellow discharge
- ◆ Lethargic demeanor
- ◆ Inability to participate in activities
- ◆ Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- ◆ Infected skin or eyes or an undiagnosed rash
- ◆ Severe itching of body or scalp
- ◆ Any unstated and known symptoms or suspected communicable/infectious disease

DISCIPLINE

Discipline should be carried out through instruction, training, and correction in a fair, firm and consistent manner. Physical discipline will not be used by anyone other than the child's parents. For additional information please see page 9.

LIST OF APPROVED WORKERS

The children's ministry coordinator will maintain and regularly update a list of approved workers for C&Y Ministries that shall be referenced prior to scheduling workers or making any substitutions.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY POLICY & PROCEDURES

GRADES 7 – 12

All staff and volunteer workers will adhere to the GFS Child Protection Policy at all times.

REGISTRATION

Proper parental/guardian consent and medical release forms for minor's participation in all GFS Children and Youth (hereafter "C&Y") ministry programs must be obtained and documented electronically at the parent orientation or time of participation in the event.

STAFFING RATIOS

When classrooms are open the Two Worker Rule (see "Safety Policies and Procedures") will be maintained at all times. A ratio of one approved adult worker to no more than twenty minors (1:20) shall apply. One adult leader may meet with two or more unrelated high school students of the same sex in approved room space at GFS.

EMERGENCY AND SICK CHILD PROCEDURES

In cases of emergency or sickness an adult leader will contact the ministry leader. The ministry leader or worker will determine if the child's parent/guardian should be contacted to have their child removed from the classroom/activity. Decisions about medical care will be left to the judgment of the parent/guardian.

TRANSPORTATION

All workers will obtain permission (electronically at the time of registration for C&Y ministry programs) from a minor's parent/guardian related to transportation. All approved adult drivers for GFS youth programs must ensure that seat belts are worn by every individual traveling in their vehicle. Adult workers must have at least two minors in their vehicle. Males must travel with at least one other male; females must travel with at least one other female. For the protection of all, workers should never be alone in a car with a minor unless an exception has been granted by the Elders or designated authorities.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

All workers will obtain permission (electronically at the time of registration for C&Y ministry programs) from a minor's parent/guardian before interacting with the minor via social media, phone, or texting. Workers are encouraged to save copies of conversations, especially those concerning personal sharing of a minor.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

APPENDIX PAGES

*** Appendix pages are reduced.**

*For full-size forms, please refer to
CPP Binder located at the check-in station.*

MINISTRY APPLICATION



CONTACT INFORMATION:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

EMAIL _____

CELL _____

HOME PHONE _____

John 12:32 "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."

Gospel Fellowship's purpose is to lift up Christ crucified so that people from every nation, tribe and language might be drawn to him. We aim to lift up Christ by Exalting his name through preaching and worship, Equipping the saints for the work of ministry and Expanding his kingdom through the proclamation of the gospel.

Directions: Ministry applicants please answer the following questions:

MATTERS OF PURPOSE:

What does it mean to be a Christian? Why would you consider yourself a disciple/student of Christ?

What is the Gospel?

How are you growing in spiritual maturity and disciplines? What are your strengths and struggles?

Where are you seeking to serve at GFS and why is it a good fit for both you and the church? Who in the church has encouraged you to seek this ministry position?

How do you see your service helping to accomplish the purpose of church (see John 12:32)?

MATTERS OF MATURITY/QUALIFICATION FOR MINISTRY:

Are you a member of GFS, willing to uphold the membership covenant, the published Confession of Faith, and the Statement of Faith?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Comments: _____

Gospel Fellowship is committed to a Biblical leadership structure of a plurality of elders/pastors as those charged with "keeping watch over your souls" (Heb 13:17). Can you joyfully and in humility serve under this leadership structure which may include their correction when applicable (Heb 13:17)?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Comments: _____

Are there patterns of sin with which you are currently struggling that would deem it wise to hold off on serving until there has been a demonstration of the fruit of repentance (Matt 3:8)? Including but not limited to: sexual impurity (fornication, adultery, pornography), substance abuse, quick tempered/violent tendencies, dishonest/unethical dealings, gossip, greed (money or power), envy, or contentiousness?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Comments: _____

Would your family, friends, colleagues and fellow GFS members consider you to be growing in love for God and others, and say that you display the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control)?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Comments: _____

Do you consent to the church performing a personal background check?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Comments: _____

Is there anything the church should know that would prevent you from serving in the desired capacity?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Comments: _____

****Gospel Fellowship of Sussex reserves the right to withhold from any ministry position due to concerns arising from a background check.****

If you are interested in serving in the Children's Ministry, please answer the following questions:

Have you been attending Gospel Fellowship for at least 6 months? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Approximate date of first attendance: ____/____/____

Have you read in its entirety the Child Protection Policy? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Have you taken the MinistrySafe Sexual Abuse Awareness Training? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Do you agree to attend regular training and reviews of the Child Protection Policy and Sexual Abuse Awareness Training? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Do you agree to abide by the guidelines laid out in the Child Protection Policy? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Have you ever been incarcerated or engaged in any physical or sexual abuse of a child? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If you are interested in serving on the Worship Ministry, please answer the following questions:

Have you completed a gifts and skills assessment with the Worship Leader? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Have you read the recommended reading? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Signed Affirmation:

I, _____, affirm before my church and the Lord these responses to be accurate and true.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

MINISTRY APPLICATION
YOUTH ASSISTANT



CONTACT INFORMATION:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

EMAIL _____

CELL _____

HOME PHONE _____

John 12:32 "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself."

Gospel Fellowship's purpose is to lift up Christ crucified so that people from every nation, tribe and language might be drawn to him. We aim to lift up Christ by Exalting his name through preaching and worship, Equipping the saints for the work of ministry and Expanding his kingdom through the proclamation of the gospel.

Directions: Ministry applicants please answer the following questions:

MATTERS OF PURPOSE:

What does it mean to be a Christian? Why would you consider yourself a disciple/student of Christ?

What is the Gospel?

How are you growing in spiritual maturity and disciplines? What are your strengths and struggles?

Where are you seeking to serve at GFS and why is it a good fit for both you and the church? Who in the church has encouraged you to seek this ministry position?

How do you see your service helping to accomplish the purpose of church (see John 12:32)?

MATTERS OF MATURITY/QUALIFICATION FOR MINISTRY:

Is a parent a member of GFS, willing to uphold the membership covenant, the published Confession of Faith, and the Statement of Faith?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Comments: _____

Gospel Fellowship is committed to a Biblical leadership structure of a plurality of elders/pastors as those charged with "keeping watch over your souls" (Heb 13:17). Can you joyfully and in humility serve under this leadership structure which may include their correction when applicable (Heb 13:17)?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Comments: _____

Are there patterns of sin with which you are currently struggling that would deem it wise to hold off on serving until there has been a demonstration of the fruit of repentance (Matt 3:8)? Including but not limited to: sexual impurity (fornication, adultery, pornography), substance abuse, quick tempered/violent tendencies, dishonest/unethical dealings, gossip, greed (money or power), envy, or contentiousness?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Comments: _____

Would your family, friends, colleagues and fellow GFS members consider you to be growing in love for God and others, and say that you display the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control)?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Comments: _____

Is there anything the church should know that would prevent you from serving in the desired capacity?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Comments: _____

****Gospel Fellowship of Sussex reserves the right to withhold from any ministry position due to concerns arising from a background check.****

If you are interested in serving in the Children's Ministry, please answer the following questions:

Have you been attending Gospel Fellowship for at least 6 months? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Approximate date of first attendance: ____/____/____

Have you read in its entirety the Child Protection Policy? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Have you taken the MinistrySafe Sexual Abuse Awareness Training? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Do you agree to attend regular training and reviews of the Child Protection Policy and Sexual Abuse Awareness Training? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Do you agree to abide by the guidelines laid out in the Child Protection Policy? ☐ YES ☐ NO

If you are interested in serving on the Worship Ministry, please answer the following questions:

Have you completed a gifts and skills assessment with the Worship Leader? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Have you read the recommended reading? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Signed Affirmation:

I, _____, affirm before my church and the Lord these responses to be accurate and true.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Limited Access Agreement

Gospel Fellowship of Sussex has reason for concern that your contact with children and youth (hereafter c&y) in our congregation places you and them at risk of accusation or incident. The following guidelines are designed to reduce risk of the same. We welcome you to GFS, but your participation will be limited to ensure the safety of our c&y and to ensure that you will not be subject to future accusations. Within these guidelines, the congregation welcomes your participation in adult worship services, adult education, adult social events, and/or _____.

- 1. You are to avoid all contact with minors on GFS property or GFS-sponsored events:
 - A. You may attend but please do not talk with minors or agree to lead, chaperone, transport, or participate in any c&y activities, classes, or intergenerational events.
 - B. If a minor in the congregation approaches you, either at church or in public, politely and immediately excuse yourself from the situation.
 - C. Please note, this agreement also applies to adults with special needs.
- 2. You will be asked to sign a Consent, Authorization and Release form to be sent to applicable professionals with whom you work, including but not limited to your parole officer and therapist.
- 3. Five GFS members will be assigned to you as “covenant partners” for the purpose of accountability, support, and supervision (see back). Please remain in the presence of a covenant partner at all times while on GFS property as well as at any GFS-sponsored activities on or off-site.
- 4. You accept that the Elders of GFS, the Child Protection Committee, and covenant partners will be told of your circumstances in order to protect c&y at GFS, as well as the following, if applicable:

- 5. You may not possess or borrow a key to GFS at any time nor use GFS computers.
- 6. You understand this contract will be reviewed/updated as needed and remain in place as long as you attend any allowed functions at GFS, unless the Elders make a written finding to the contrary.

Other Restrictions, Amendments, and/or Notes:

*Please note: The Elders may deny a person convicted of a sexual offense access to GFS if they are found to be in violation of the Limited Access Agreement or at high risk of recidivism, or in their sole discretion for any reason.

*Signatures on next page must be attached.

I have reviewed this policy and agree to abide by it or I will be required to relinquish participation and/or membership at GFS and be denied access to GFS functions and GFS property.

_____	_____	_____
Name (Printed)	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Witness Name (Printed)	Signature	Date

COVENANT PARTNERS

_____	_____	_____
Name (Printed)	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Name (Printed)	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Name (Printed)	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Name (Printed)	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Name (Printed)	Signature	Date

WITNESS/ES

_____	_____	_____
Witness Name (Printed)	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Witness Name (Printed)	Signature	Date

Consent, Authorization, and Release

Name: _____ Social Security No.: _____

Date of Birth: _____

I have requested access to the property and/or activities of Gospel Fellowship of Sussex (“GFS”), and, in GFS’s discretion, it has required me to sign and abide by the GFS Limited Access Agreement (“LAA”), which is incorporated by reference into this Consent, Authorization, and Release (this “Consent”). I understand that GFS would not enter into the LAA with me if I did not agree to the terms in this Consent.

- 1. As the above-named individual, I authorize the disclosure and use of my medical records (including those related to treatment by therapists, psychologists, or other mental health professionals) parole, probationary and court records (even if expunged/under seal), and any related records (the “Records and Information”).
- 2. I understand that individuals or organizations which GFS may ask to disclose the Records and Information may require me to execute further authorizations in order to release them, and I agree to promptly execute these further authorizations. If I do not GFS has the right to immediately revoke the LAA.
- 3. I understand that the information in my Records and Information may also include information about behavioral or mental health services, and treatment for alcohol and drug abuse, and may disclose information relating to sexually transmitted disease, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).
- 5. This Records and Information may be disclosed to and used by GFS and its employees and staff for purposes of evaluating, monitoring, and reducing risk of incident.
- 6. I understand I have the right to revoke this Consent at any time. I understand if I revoke my Consent, I must do so in writing and present my written revocation to a GFS Elder. I understand the revocation will not apply to information that has already been released in response to this Consent. Unless otherwise revoked, this Consent will expire in one (1) year from the date below. I understand that revoking my consent will automatically result in a revocation of the LAA.
- 7. I understand that authorizing the disclosure of the Records and Information is voluntary. I can refuse to sign this Consent. I understand any disclosure of Records and Information carries with it the potential for unauthorized re-disclosure and the information may not be protected by federal confidentiality rules.
- 8. I hereby release GFS and its agents, employees, volunteers and chaperones from any and all claims, damages or injury arising out of or related to this Consent, including but not limited to defamation actions, employment actions, intentional infliction of emotional distress, breach of duty, invasion of privacy, or arising out of or related to the disclosure of any Records or Information or rendering of any opinion given under this authorization, whether under Wisconsin or federal statute, regulation, or common law, to the fullest extent allowed by law.

By:

Name:

Date:

Appendix D

Revised 07.29.26

Child Abuse & Neglect Incident Report

Waukesha Department of Children and Families (WDCF): 608-422-7000
For immediate help, call the Sussex Police Department: 262-446-5070 (non-emergency)

Call WDCRF: 608-422-7000 Date of call: _____ Time of call: _____

Mandated Reporter's Name (Your Name): _____

Intake Worker's Name: _____

CHILD'S NAME: _____

Child's Age: _____ Special Needs (circle): Y N

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Description of Incident (describe indicators of abuse/neglect, incident, date, time, and place. Describe the physical injuries/emotional condition of the child. Describe maltreater's access to the child.):

Alleged Maltreater(s):

Name: _____ Age: _____ Relationship: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____ Relationship: _____

Adult Witness: _____ Witness Phone #: _____

Witness Address: _____

Other Witnesses: _____

Action Taken: _____

Parent Notification (circle): Y N If yes, indicate date & time: _____

Call to Law Enforcement (circle): Y N If yes, indicate date & time: _____

Notes of all Interactions:

Signature of Person Completing Form

Position

Date _____



GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP OF SUSSEX
N74W25332 Howard Lane | PO Box 272 | Sussex, WI 53089
(262) 714-1080

www.gospelfellowshipofsussex.com
office@gfswi.org