

## Is There Really A Need:

-3500 Churches in the US will face the allegation of sexual misconduct with a child or youth this year.

-10,000 Churches in the US will face the allegation of non sexual physical or verbal misconduct against a child or youth this year.

-70% of all Churches in the US have no formal screening process in place for volunteers.

-1 in 15 Volunteers that are screened have something in their background that would either limit or disqualify them from serving with children or youth.

-In the current US court system, Churches can be found liable for the negligent selection and appointment of a volunteer or paid employee in Children's Ministries. Churches are expected to make informed and appropriate placements of workers and volunteers that have access to children.

Northwestern Illinois District  
Children's Ministries Council  
Resource Material List:

*Safe Place-Guidelines for  
Creating an Abuse Free  
Environment*

*Reducing the Risk of Child  
Sexual Abuse in Your Church*

*Guidelines for Ministry Workers-  
Sample Policy for Children and  
Youth workers*  
www. Brotherhoodmutual.com

*Safe Sanctuary, Safe Kids –M3  
Nashville 2003 Tape #162 D  
Blevins & L. Hart*  
www.cornerstonetapes.com

Screenchurchstaff.com

Christianministry.org

For additional resource materials, sample policy and procedure outlines and forms for adapting Operation Safe Kids at your local Church please contact Trisha Wilson @ 309-441-5454 or Kim Evans @ 815-875-1900.

# Operation Safe Kids

## Purpose

Operation Safe Kids is a three fold protection strategy. This strategy aims to protect:

-The physical, spiritual, and emotional well being of the children entrusted to the care of the local Church.

- The dedicated staff of both paid employee's and volunteer workers who give of their time and talents to serve in Children's Ministries.

- The reputation within the community, the financial interest and the moral and legal obligations of the local church.

## Phase One – Facility Safety

Perform a Facility Safety Check to insure the following:

- All outlets should be covered.
- No loose or dangling cords, cables or mini blind strings.
- Toys with pieces smaller than a paper towel roll insert should be thrown away.
- Craft supplies like crayons, glue, scissors etc. should be stored above child's eye level or in a locking cabinet.
- TV/VCR units should be wall or ceiling mounted.

Emergency Preparations:

- Develop an Emergency Exit Strategy, post it in the facility and have scheduled drills.
- Have complete First Aid Kits placed and marked in the facility.\*
- Have Emergency Response Baggies in all Children's Ministries Rooms.\*
- Secure Secondary entrances to the facility during services.
- Establish an Open Door Policy in Children's Ministries Rooms.\*

Children's Ministry Workers:

- Establish the 2 Adult Rule\*
- Establish a minimum age requirement for volunteers.\*
- Never allow volunteers under the age of 18 to be left alone with or in charge of children.
- Establish a 6 month minimum attendance rule for all volunteers.\*

## Phase Two – Child Safety

Provide and require Photo ID Badges for all authorized Children's Workers.

Develop and implement a Children's Registration Form for all Children's Ministries Programs (samples available).

Develop and implement a formal Sign In/Out Policy for all children birth – 6<sup>th</sup> grade (samples available).

- All workers should be present at least 10 minutes prior to the start of any scheduled activity.
- Sign In/Out Sheets for every room with required parent signature.

**OR**

- Photo ID's for children with security pick up badges.
- No child should ever be released to a non parent under the age of 18.
- No child should ever be released unaccompanied.

Develop and implement a consistent discipline strategy and post it in all Children's Ministries Rooms.\*

**Additional Resources are also available that include titles like:  
Help for the Mobil Church and  
Help for the Small church**

## Phase Three – Volunteer Safety

Develop and implement a Safety Strategy which should include the following:

Volunteer and Employee Screening:

- Written application, oral interview with the pastor, background and reference check.
- 6 month waiting period
- Yearly review and regularly scheduled training for volunteers.

Staffing and Supervision:

- 2 Adult Rule
- Volunteer Age Minimum
- Restroom Guidelines
- Discipline Strategy
- Communicable Disease Policy
- Illness, Injury, Emergency Strategy

Violation of Policy/Allegation of Abuse Response Plan

- Allegation of Sexual Misconduct
- Allegation of Non Sexual Physical Misconduct
- Allegation of Verbal Misconduct

Forms and Materials:

- Volunteer Application
- Illness & Injury Report

(samples available upon request)

Ongoing worker training could include:

- CPR Certification/Emergency First Aid
- Who is a mandatory reporter/ How to recognize signs of abuse
- ABC Gospel presentation for kids
- Behavior & Discipline Strategies for in the classroom