

Abuse-free FMC: Reduce the Risk Training Keeping FMC Safe

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Jen Myers

FMC Abuse Prevention & Response Training

- Why?
- FMC protocol
 - Purposes
 - Training and Registering caregivers
 - General guidelines
 - What is abuse
 - Reporting & responding
 - Restoring

Why?

- Abuse is widespread and tragic, with long lasting affects
 - More than 20,000 Indiana Children per year are abused/neglected
- FMC believes God is a God of love and interested in protecting children, youth, and adults
- FMC will not allow, condone, or tolerate abuse
- FMC is committed to providing a safe, secure and healthy environment for all children, youth and adults who enter its doors.

Protocol Purpose

- Why have a policy?
 - To **ensure safety to all**
 - **Abuse prevention policy:** it is a preventive step to ensure the safety of children, youth and adults and to protect workers from possible false accusations.
 - **Provide guidelines for:**
 - Training/education about abuse –why we are here today
 - Screening/registering staff and volunteers
 - reporting abuse diligently
 - Responding appropriately
 - Restoration plans
- ❖ Will be continually updated

Protocol

- Protocol governs interactions between participants: current and future, paid and unpaid.

Adult \leftrightarrow adult/child/youth

Child \leftrightarrow child

Youth \leftrightarrow child

Youth \leftrightarrow youth

- Administered by Pastor Elder Team and other committees or groups given specific responsibilities

General Guidelines

Registering Personnel:

- Everyone formally interacting with minors (children/youth under 18) at FMC will
 1. Attend Yearly Training/complete online training
 2. Sign Memorandum of Understanding YEARLY
 3. Complete screening with the Indiana Sheriff's Sex and Violent Offender Registry (one time)

* Exception – volunteer attending FMC < 1 yr complete screening with Indiana Sheriff's Sex and Violent Offender Registry AND 2 references who have known him or her for at least two years *

General Guidelines cont.

- 2 adults present whenever possible – when only 1 doors always open
- At the conclusion of activities: children under age 6 released to authorized adult only
- Supervision during unstructured times is provided by parent/guardian (example: before and after Sunday School)
- Facility sharers (not FMC) release FMC of liability

General Guidelines cont.

Discipline and expressions of affection:

- Respect physical boundaries
 - No kissing on lips or touching of private areas (covered by bathing suit)
 - Appropriate: ask for permission, quick hug, hand squeeze, offered but not forced
- Nurturing discipline
 - No hitting, spanking, kicking or slapping
 - Verbal discipline: given respectfully and compassionately
 - Involve child's parent(s) or guardian(s)

Important Definitions

Adult: a person 18 years of age or older

Minor/child: a person under the age of 18 (in relation to law and reporting abuse)

Important Definitions

Abuse: the act or omission by any person where the act or omission results in physical injury, emotional disability, or sexual exploitation of the child with or without the child's consent.

–Physical: non accidental injury to child or allowing another person to do so (or putting the child at risk of being injured)

–Sexual: any sexual act between adult and child or child and older child (or allowing another person to do so)

–Emotional: any attitude or behavior which interferes with a child's mental health and social development

***Power differential** is exploited , Trust is eroded, Long lasting affects

Neglect: failure to meet basic needs including food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education or supervision

(Prevent Child Abuse, 2013) (Commit to Kids)

Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect

The following signs listed may be an indicator of something other than abuse or neglect, however any indicator which gives one **reason to believe that abuse or neglect is occurring should be reported.**

- ❖ Verbally reports abuse of any kind
- ❖ Unexplained bruises, welts, burns, lumps, bumps
 - Reporting being left alone
 - Dirty, smelly, torn or inappropriate clothing for the weather
 - Begging/stealing food
 - Underweight/failure to thrive
 - Developmental delays
 - Depression
 - Eager to please
 - Appears frightened of caretaker
 - Aggressive, overt sexual behavior
 - Withdrawal

Identifying and Reporting Abuse

- It is the law: everyone in Indiana has the responsibility to report **known or suspected** abuse and neglect (mandatory reporters)

When signs or symptoms of abuse or neglect arise, individual witnesses abuse or neglect, or a child makes a disclosure:

1. Make oral report immediately to the Department of Child Services or local law enforcement (can be made anonymously) 1-800-800-5556
2. Notify PET → will activate response team
 - Can assist reporter in making report and processing the incident

Identifying and Reporting Abuse

- PET shall notify the parent or guardian of the victim and take needed steps to activate the response team
- Seek guidance from Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference staff and legal counsel as necessary
- Response team to work with alleged victim, the accused, and families to seek resolution and healing ONLY if it does not interfere with or compromise official investigations by authorities

Response Team

- Preliminary panel chosen by Gifts Discernment Committee
- Comprised 6 layperson from the congregation
 - Professional experience with abuse
 - Skills in conflict resolution
 - Ability to provide emotional support
 - Spiritual maturity
 - Willingness to participate
- Ultimate team forms after incident
- Scope: Child abuse, Professional abuse ,Domestic Violence

Questions/Scenarios