**Thompson’s Station United Methodist Church**

**Safe Sanctuary Policies and Procedures**

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***“ENSURING SAFE SANCTUARY FOR GOD'S PEOPLE”***

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**ADOPTED BY THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL June 2010**

**Revised February 2024**

**“ENSURING SAFE SANCTUARY FOR GOD'S PEOPLE”**

Jesus’ teachings provide for a peaceable kingdom for all of God's people, including our most precious gifts, our children and youth (Matthew 5:9, Luke 18:15-17). This peaceable kingdom starts with sanctuary.

**POLICY STATEMENT**

The General Conference of The United Methodist Church, in April 1996, adopted a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of child sexual abuse in the church. The adopted resolution includes the following statement:

Jesus said, “Whoever welcomes (a) child . . . welcomes me,” (Matthew 18:5). Children are our present, our future, our hope, our teachers, and 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. The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church state that “. . . children must be protected from economic, physical and sexual exploitation, and abuse.”

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. (From The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church – 1996. Copyright © 1996: The United Methodist Publishing House. Used by permission. [Pp.384-386])

Thus, in covenant with all United Methodist congregations, TSUMC adopts this policy for the prevention of child abuse in our church.

**PURPOSE**

Our congregation’s purpose for establishing this policy and accompanying procedures is to demonstrate our absolute and unwavering commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all of our children, youth, workers and congregation

**STATEMENT OF COVENANT**

Therefore, as a Christian community of faith and a United Methodist congregation, we pledge to conduct the ministry of the gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of all of our children and youth as well as all of the workers with children and youth. We will follow reasonable safety measures in the selection and recruitment of workers; we will implement prudent operational procedures in all programs and events; we will educate all of our workers with children and youth regarding the use of all appropriate policies and methods (including first aid and methods of discipline); we will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse that conforms to the requirements of state law; and we will be prepared to respond to media inquiries if an incident occurs.

**CONCLUSION**

In all of our ministries with children and youth as well as adults, this congregation is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that everyone will be “ . . . surrounded by steadfast love, . . . established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal” (“Baptismal Covenant II, United Methodist Hymnal, p. 44)

**TSUMC POLICY**

**Definitions of Ages**

**1. An adult** -- Someone who is at least 18 years old, has been an active participant at least 6 months, who has been through the training and signed the covenant form.

2. **Child** - Generally defined as a person below the age of 18.

3. **Children** - Persons 0-11 years of age. Additionally defined as all persons from infants

through the fifth grade or sixth grade, as determined by each local church in order to

conform with grade-level practices of its local area schools regarding classifications

of elementary schools and middle or junior high schools.

4. **Youth** - 12-18 years of age. Additionally defined as all persons in the sixth-grade or

seventh-grade through the twelfth-grade, as determined by each local church in order to

conform with grade-level practices of its local area schools regarding classifications of

middle or junior high schools and high schools.

5. **Vulnerable-** persons any adult aged 18 or over who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation is permanently or for the time being unable to take care of him or herself, or to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference of **Abusive and inappropriate behavior -** any behavior that causes another person to doubt that he or she is a valued and loved child of God, redeemed by Jesus Christ. These behaviors can include, but are not limited to:

* + Sexual abuse – touching people when they do not want to be touched, or in places that they do not want to be touched, or engaging in unwanted and immoral sexual contact
	+ Sexual harassment – other behaviors that do not include touching or other physical contact, but which include words and gestures of a sexual nature
	+ Name-calling – words that degrade attack or reduce a person(s) to something much less than a child of God.
	+ Fighting – being either physically or verbally abusive to another person(s)

**Definitions of Abuse**

6. Child abuse is the harm or threatened harm to a child’s health or welfare by a person

responsible for the child’s health or welfare or by a person in a position of trust, which harm

occurs or is threatened through non-accidental physical or mental injury or sexual abuse.

7. Vulnerable Persons abuse is the harm or threatened harm to a vulnerable person’s health

or welfare by a person responsible for the vulnerable person’s health or welfare or by a

person in a position of trust, which harm occurs or is threatened through non-accidental

physical or mental injury or sexual abuse. A vulnerable person is any adult aged 18 or over

who, by reason of mental or other disability, age, illness or other situation is permanently or

for the time being unable to take care of him or herself, or to protect him or herself against

significant harm or exploitation.

8. Physical Abuse is any deliberate act that inflicts bodily harm to a person, or failure to

protect from physical harm where a duty exists to do so.

9. Neglect is failure to provide nutrition, medical, surgical, or any other care necessary for the well being of the child, youth, or vulnerable persons.

10. Sexual Abuse is any sexual contact or sexually explicit language, gestures, or images by a volunteer or staff person with, or directed to, a participant.

11. Child Sexual Abuse occurs any time a child is used for the sexual stimulation of an adult or older child. A child is powerless either to consent to or resist such sexual acts. This includes fondling, sexual intercourse, forced participation in sexual acts, incest, exploitation for the purpose of pornography or prostitution, and/or exposure to adult sexual activity.

12. Emotional abuse is submitting a child, youth or vulnerable adult to verbal assault or

emotional cruelty. Emotional abuse can include closed confinement (being shut in a small

area), making racial remarks, excessive punishment, pervasive use of profanity in a

denigrating or humiliating manner, knowingly permitting drug or alcohol abuse, ignoring or

encouraging peer abuse.

**Background Checks**

* All paid staff, as a condition of their employment, shall submit to a background check through the State of Tennessee to be paid for by the church. Ministers are already required to do this through their conference.
* All persons, even volunteers, who intend to work with children, youth, and/or vulnerable persons and will at any time be alone with the above mentioned persons shall submit to a background check through the State of Tennessee to be paid for by the church. The Basic package ( $19.95 2024 price) per background report) includes identity verification, [national criminal search](https://iprospectcheck.com/national-criminal-database-search/), and [national sex offender search](https://iprospectcheck.com/sex-offender-background-check/)) is the required background check in accordance with our insurance company’s requirements.
* Any person staff or volunteer that is new to the state of Tennessee will also have a background check from the state they resided in the past 7 years.

**Procedures for implementing policy with volunteer staff**

* **Selection and recruitment of workers**
	+ Six (6) month rule
		- Before working with any child other than his or her own, a person must be an active participant of the church for 6 months. (Recommended by the UM Conference)
	+ Five (5) year rule.
		- No one under 18 may work with children or youth but any adult working with children or teens must be at least 5 years older than the oldest youth with whom they will be working; e.g. if the oldest youth in a group is 16, a worker must be at least 21 years old.
	+ Covenant form and training
		- Before beginning an assignment working with children or youth, a person must attend a training opportunity provided by TSUMC. Upon completing the training, the person is to sign the covenant form for workers with children, youth, vulnerable persons and agrees to attend additional training at least once every three years as well as agrees to a background check (usually ever 3 years) if they are going to be the alone adult in the room or at the event.
	+ Prudent operational procedures for programs and events

**The following must be adhered to by employed workers as well as volunteer workers:**

* **Two adults Rule**
	+ There must be two adults physically present when working with children or youth and within sight or sound of the children or youth at every program and activity, including the nursery. The second adult may be a floater between classes or in the hallway.
	+ The following is a chart showing ratios of adults to students:

|  |
| --- |
| **Maximum Number of Children/Youth Per Adult : At least 2 adults must be present**  |
| Infants (0-18 months)  | 1 adult:2 children  | Elementary  | 1 adult:8 children  |
| Toddlers(18 months-3 yrs)  | 1 adult:4 children  | Middle School  | 1 adult:10 children  |
| Preschool (3-5 yrs)  | 1 adult:5 children  | High School  | 1 adult:10 children  |

* **Sight or Sound Rule**
	+ An adult must always be within sight or sound of the other adult, or within sight or sound of at least 2 other children or youth. If there is only one adult present in a room with children or youth, there must be an open door and another adult within sound of the children.
* **Nursery Policies During Worship Services**
	+ Only children of appropriate ages (4 and under) are permitted in the nursery during worship services.
	+ Each child brought into the nursery will have a registration form on file; parents will be asked to sign children in and out of the nursery.
	+ Bottles may be brought for children who are not mobile and who must be held by the volunteer or staff member in the nursery to be fed.  Bottles must be clearly labeled with the child’s name, be pre-made by the parent/guardian and must not need refrigeration or reheating.
	+ Parents will be asked to change the diapers of their child.
	+ Parents/guardian of the children in the nursery must remain in the building or on the premises at all times.
	+ Only parents or authorized individuals may remove the child from the nursery.
* **Children/Youth in Outside Church Buildings**
	+ No child or youth **(anyone under the age of 18)** may be alone in any outside building belonging to the church at any time. There must be an adult present at all times. These buildings include Church Office, Church Storage Building and Church Teen Building.
		- The church realizes that unattended children/youth either during church functions or afterwards or on weekdays/nights create a liability and safety issue that must be addressed. Likewise no child is to ever be left in the church building alone or on church grounds alone.
* **Counseling Children and Youth**
	+ Recognizing that in working with teens and youth, workers are sometimes asked to meet privately with a youth or child to share a confidence or to conference with that youth regarding intimate subjects, no adult may meet with a youth for such purposes without an additional adult being within sight or sound distance. Should such a conversation spontaneously begin without an additional adult present, the worker is to halt the conversation until such time as the proper procedures are in place.
* **Permission for taking a child or youth with you in a vehicle**
	+ When it is necessary to travel away from the church, permission must be given in writing by the parents before the child or youth can ride with an adult worker. If written permission is not available, a telephone call shall be made and a written record kept of that call to the parent in order to make reasonable transportation accommodations. For out of town trips, especially overnight trips, written permission must always be given as well as the medical/insurance form.
* **Response Plan for Unknown Persons on Premises:**
	+ If, during a scheduled activity for children/youth, an unknown person enters the church or the area where the activity is being held, certain responses should be followed. The adult in charge of the program should:
* Approach the unknown individual with care and concern inquiring about their needs.
* If unknown individual states their concern/needs, escort them to the pastor to help the individual meet his needs or concerns. If the pastor is not available, offer to contact someone from the church who might be able to assist the individual with their needs.
* If the unknown individual does not have a valid concern or need, ask them to leave the premises immediately. Notify the pastor immediately.
* The adult in charge or pastor will make sure the individual has left the premises. If they refuse to leave, notify the authorities.
* If the person states that they are just waiting for someone, escort him/her to the outside of the building and one of the adults working with the program should remain with the individual until he/she has left the church grounds.
* Under no circumstances, should the person who is not with the program be allowed to wander around the church when children/youth are present.  They should be supervised at all times until they leave the premises.

**Technology:**

* Pictures or video taken of children or youth through the use of cell phones or cameras should not be distributed without the written permission of the parents or guardians. (See Form)
* Youth and children should not post pictures from church events on social networking sites such as Face book.
* In turn, the church will not post pictures of youth and children without written permission of the parents or guardians.
* Under no circumstances should any identifying information accompany the posting of a picture.
* If computer access is given to children or youth while at church, an adult will always monitor the computer activity.   When possible, filtering software will be installed to restrict access to inappropriate sites.
* There should be no personal web site or blog with a domain using the Church’s name or TSUMC other than [www.tsumc.com](http://www.tsumc.com) **or our Facebook site. There shall be no site in TSUMC’s name on any other media/internet site such as X, Truth, Instagram etc.** unless established by the Admin Board through its authorized person. This is a liability issue.

**Outside Groups Using Our Church Facilities:**

* Groups using our church facilities with children or youth must agree to follow the rules of this document.
* A copy will be available on the hall bulletin board and also in the church office.See the attached form.

**When a Suspected Incident Occurs**

* **Procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse**
	+ Every suspected incidence of abuse and/or inappropriate behavior shall be reported immediately to the pastor or chairman of PPR of the church. If the incident involves the pastor, the district superintendent or a member of the annual conference Committee on Investigation of the Board of Ordained Ministry may also contacted.
	+ Parent(s) of the child or youth are to be notified. Necessary steps to assure the child or youth’s safety and well-being are to be taken as soon as possible.
	+ The accused abuser is to be treated with dignity and is to be removed from further involvement with children and youth, pending the incident’s resolution.
	+ Tennessee’s Department of Children’s Services is responsible for investigating. Their number (1-877-542-2873) is open 24/7. See attached document: “Child Abuse Reporting Steps for Teachers.”
	+ A written record shall be made of each response step taken by the church. This is necessary for the church’s insurance and attorney. See attached “Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse.”
* **Procedure for reporting missing child**
	+ Report any missing child or youth immediately to the parents or guardian; authorities, pastor and PPR chairman
* **Responding to requests for information from media:**
	+ A brief and honest statement can be made to the congregation and to the media that does not give unnecessary details, does not place blame, does not interfere with the victim’s privacy, and does not violate any confidentiality concerns. The pastor or PPR Chairman should make this statement.
* **Responsibility for the care of both the accused and the accuser**
	+ There are many victims when there is abuse of children within a congregation: the child/youth, his or her family, the family of the accused, and the congregation as a place of sanctuary itself. Pastoral care is to be provided to all concerned. In some situations, it may be necessary for a minister from a nearby congregation to provide the care for the family of the abuser.

**Educating church workers of children and youth**

* Using the attached “Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church” model, TSUMC will provide at least annual training for their workers with children and youth consisting of 3 hours training to be conducted by The Minister and a PPR designee. A worker must attend an initial training before beginning work with children and youth, and at least once every 3 years thereafter.
* A list of persons who have been through the training and have signed the participation covenant shall be kept in the church office and Sunday school superintendent’s office and will be updated annually. If there is a need for a “last minute” request for an additional worker in the nursery or in a class, this list will provide a pool of potential substitutes who have already been approved as a worker with children and youth.

**Safe Sanctuaries Training – 3 hr. session**

* **Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church**
	+ Read together Luke 9:46-48
	+ Use video by Joy Melton
* **Discussion: What are some of the ways that we show that children are important to God?**
	+ Nursery
	+ Sunday school
	+ Vacation Bible School
	+ Summer Camp
	+ Children’s Sermon
	+ Children’s Church
	+ Baptism
	+ Parenting in the Pews
	+ other
* **Current Occurrences and Statistics**
	+ 2 million reported incidents per year – about one incident every 15 seconds.
	+ Even the accusation of abuse is serious.
* **Reasons to implement a child abuse prevention strategy**
	+ Our church is a community of faith that can offer a safe haven and sanctuary where children and youth can seek advice, help and nurture.
	+ Our church is a place where more than just facts of child of abuse can be taught. We also teach and proclaim our Christian values: compassion, justice, repentance, and grace.
	+ Our church is a place where children can come and learn and develop the inner strength and spiritual resources they will need to feel truly connected to God and to face suffering and evil.
	+ Our church can be the place where children and adults are able to learn how to respond to painful and confusing events using the Scriptures’ wisdom.
* **Reason for this training and discussion**
	+ To protect our children from possible abuse
	+ To protect our workers from false allegations.
* **Focus on Child Abuse and how can we recognize it?**
	+ Physical abuse – deliberate and intentional bodily harm (battery with a weapon, burning, shaking, kicking, choking, fracturing bones, and other non-accidental injuring)
	+ Emotional abuse – spoken and/or unspoken violence or emotional cruelty (messages of worthlessness, badness, undeserving of love and care)
	+ Neglect – endangering a child’s health, safety or welfare through negligence (withholding food, clothing, medical care, education, affection and affirmation)
	+ Sexual abuse – contact between adult and a child who cannot give consent or is not able to resist contact (fondling, intercourse, incest, exploitation and exposure to pornography)
	+ Ritual abuse – inflicted regularly, intentionally and in a stylized manner, often in the name of a “higher power”
* **Recognizing Abusers**
	+ Must not make assumptions based on income, employment, or any other external factor
	+ Could be anyone who has access to children – staff, volunteers, parents, laity
	+ Most of the time the abuser is someone known to the child
	+ Gets sense of power by exploiting a child’s vulnerability by being:
		- Older, stronger, bigger
		- Richer, smarter
		- In charge
	+ Abusers seek opportunities when abuse can occur alone with a child; when there is not enough supervision for the number of children involved;

or when there is no other adult around to witness or prevent the abuse

* **Consequences of child abuse**
	+ Abused child must be cared for
		- physical healing
		- emotional healing
	+ Families of child and accused abuser must be cared for
		- trust issues
		- financial issues
	+ Congregation must be cared for
		- trust issues
		- financial issues
	+ Civil or criminal litigation may occur
		- litigation extends the time the incident is an issue
		- civil rights of the accused abuser must be protected
		- expense of litigation
		- expense of counseling for victims
		- expense of legal judgments against the congregation
		- potential for reduced attendance as members/visitors stay away
	+ No congregation can afford (financially, ethically, or morally) to fail to implement strategies for the reduction and prevention of child sexual abuse
* **What we can do to keep our children and workers safe**
	+ Developing and approving a child abuse prevention policy
	+ Develop steps to protect and select staff – employees and volunteers
		- Application process including volunteer application
		- 6 month rule
		- 2 unrelated adults rule
		- Maintaining Appropriate Interpersonal Boundaries
		- 5 years older rule
		- Appropriate Settings using the “Protected Access Rule” – other people can see in (doors open, room visible through windows)
		- Informed parents – activities, permission slips, etc.
		- First aid training and access to first aid supplies
		- Adequate insurance coverage
		- Training of volunteers and staff with participant covenant
		- Reporting suspected abuse
		- Keep records of what was done and when using proper documentation

**Participation Covenant & Volunteer Worker Information Preschool/Children/Youth**

**Complete this form; read the participant’s covenant and answer its brief questionnaire.**

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

First Middle Last

Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Zip:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Are you United Methodist \_\_\_\_\_How long? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date joined TSUMC\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. If not a member, have you been attending TSUMC? \_\_\_\_\_\_ How long?

3. Have you ever been charged with, indicted for, convicted of, or pled guilty to an offense involving a minor, illegal sexual activity, or other harm to another person? Yes\_\_ No\_\_\_

TSUMC’s congregation is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, 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.

* + No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (either sexual abuse, physical abuse, or emotional abuse) should volunteer to work with children or youth in any church-sponsored activity.
	+ All adult volunteers involved with children or youth of our church must have been active participants of the congregation for at least 6 months before beginning a volunteer assignment.
	+ Adult volunteers with children and youth shall observe the “2 adult rule” at all times so that no adult is ever alone with children or youth. The 2nd adult may be a floater between classes or in the hallway.
	+ Adult volunteers with children and youth shall attend meetings provide by the church to keep them informed of church policies and state laws.
	+ Adult volunteers shall immediately report to the pastor or the lay leader any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.

**As a volunteer, do you agree: (Check YES or NO)**

1. \_ YES \_ NO I will observe & abide by all church policies regarding working with children & youth
2. \_ YES \_ NO I will observe the 2 adult rule at all times
3. \_ YES \_ NO I will participate in trainings that the church will provide
4. \_ YES \_ NO I will abide by the 6 month rule before beginning an assignment to work with any child other than my own
5. \_ YES \_ NO I will promptly report abusive or inappropriate behavior to the pastor or lay leader of this congregation
6. \_ YES \_ NO I will consent to a background check if I am assigned to be the lone leader or the head leader of the group.
7. I have read this Participation Covenant, and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth above.
8. Date: \_\_\_\_\_Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**TSUMC Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse**

Victim’s Name:

 First Middle Last

Date of Birth Age

Date/place of initial conversation with victim \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Victim’s statement (give detailed summary)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of person accused of abuse

Relationship of accused to victim

Reported to pastor/PPR Chairman date/time

Summary of report to pastor/lay leader

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Call to victim’s parent/guardian date/time, made by, spoke with, summary

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Call to local law enforcement agency date/time, made by, spoke with, summary

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Other contacts --date/time, made by, spoke with, and summary

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Worker observing/receiving disclosure of incident \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of person making report \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of report \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Child Abuse Reporting Steps for Teachers**

**When should you suspect Child abuse or neglect? Some examples include:**

• A child has repeated unexplained injuries

• It is apparent that the child’s basic needs (food, clothing, shelter) are not regularly met

• Child exhibits sexual behavior that is not age appropriate

• Child experiences a sudden drop in grades or participation in activities

• The child behaves erratically, ranging from aggressive and disruptive to passive

**These signs could indicate child abuse or neglect or could be signs of other problems. How do I know if it is appropriate for me to make a report?** Tennessee law, TCA 37-1-403(a)(1), states that any person who has knowledge of suspected abuse should make a report. You aren’t required to have proof of child abuse/neglect in order to report concern.

**How do I report?** You can call the department of Children’s Services toll free Central Intake reporting line at 1-877-542-2873. This line is open 24/7 and a trained case manager will take your information. The case manager will ask you for basic demographic information like names, addresses, names of siblings, and other family members, in addition to details of your concerns. Please do not be alarmed if you do not know the answers to all of the questions. With regard to the details of the report, be prepared to describe the child’s injuries or condition and to relay information the child told you. Also, give names of other persons who have knowledge of this situation. Explain why the child’s situation is concerning you. If you are unable to call the reporting line, you may fax your information to 615-253-6588.

**What will happen next?**

**Screening-** First the central intake staff will screen your information to determine if it meets the criteria for DCS involvement. This is called the screening decision. Many people call in legitimate concerns that are not necessarily appropriate for state intervention. The case manager who takes your call will ask if you want to receive notification of the screening decision and you will receive this by mail.

**Assignment and Priority-** If DCS investigates your report, the central intake staff will determine the timeframe for that response.

Priority 1 situations indicate imminent threat of serious harm or death and require a same day response, within 2-3 hours.

Priority 2 situation indicate risk of injuries that are not life threatening and do not require immediate medical care. These cases require a 48-hour response.

Priority 3 cases involve a lower risk of harm and DCS responds within 5 days of the report.

**What if I have a situation where I am uncomfortable in allowing a child to go home?**

If you have called in a report and need to know if and when DCS will respond, then you should follow up with the local DCS office. They can help you work through the current situation. If you continue to have concerns about the child going home, you may also report the situation to your local Law Enforcement Agency or Juvenile Court.

**What happens after the report?**

If DCS initiates an investigation or assessment, they will talk to and observe the victim, his/her siblings, the parents/caretakers, and any other persons who have knowledge about the situation. You may be contacted by DCS to provide further information.

**Will I know the outcome of the investigation?**

The actual investigative file is confidential so you will not be able to find out if the report was considered to be “indicated” (or substantiated) or the DCS’s next steps in regard to the case. DCS makes every attempt to keep children safe in the most familiar environment, preserving connections with family, school, and community. They will look for ways to make the child safe in the home or with relatives, if that is possible.

**Will DCS tell the parents that I called in the report?**

By law, DCS and Juvenile Courts preserve the confidentiality of the name of the reporter. However, it is common for some parents to guess at the name of the reporter and to claim that DCS told the name. You should work with your local law enforcement agency to determine how you should respond in the event a parent comes to challenge you or anyone else about the report. If you make your initial report to law enforcement, you should know that police reports do not have the same protections as Juvenile Court and DCS files

**THOMPSON’S STATION UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**PARENTAL PERMISSION, RELEASE, AND CONSENT TO MEDICAL TREATMENT**

The undersigned, being the parent or legal guardian of (youth's name) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and such youth being under eighteen (18) years of age, does give permission for such youth to accompany the group and participate in the activities sponsored by Thompson’s Station United Methodist Church (TSUMC) which may involve either traveling in church owned vans or buses or in other buses or private vehicles. This authorization shall be effective continuously from the date hereof until cancelled by written notice to TSUMC.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Initials) I have the legal authority to sign this permission, release, and consent to medical treatment. I will keep informed of the church sponsored activities for my youth. If I do not want my youth to accompany the group and participate in any specific church sponsored activity, I will take sole responsibility to see that my youth does not participate.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Initials) I hereby release TSUMC, its staff, employees, drivers, sponsors and helpers from any liability for injury or damages suffered by the above youth and agree to release, indemnify and waive my rights by subrogation I may have, and hold harmless TSUMC, its staff, employees, drivers, sponsors, and helpers from injury or damages to my youth.

**Please attend to the following information and requests:**

Parent / Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I can be reached at the following:

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*In case of an emergency and the parent / guardian is not available, please indicate an emergency contact person:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Are there any medical problems or special physical conditions or allergies of which we need to know?

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

If *Yes*, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (Initials) I hereby consent and authorize the adult leader(s) accompanying my youth to obtain

emergency medical treatment in case of injury or illness upon presentation of this authorization or a

photocopy thereof.

Insurance Company \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Group Insurance Number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Policy Number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ PPO/HMO? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Full name of policy holder: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Employer:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Claims Address of Company: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE ATTACH A PHOTOCOPY OF YOUR INSURANCE CARD.**

I give permission for my youth's picture to appear in newsletters, pamphlets, web page, etc. ( ) Yes ( ) No

Please note that it is the responsibility of each parent, guardian, or managing conservator to update this

information as the need arises.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent, Guardian, or Managing Conservator Date

**Thompson’s Station United Methodist Church**

**Accident Report**

(To be used to report any minor or major injury to a child or youth occurring either on church property or on a church-related trip.)

**Please print all information**

Date of Accident: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Time of Accident: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of child/youth injured: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Age \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address of child/youth: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Parent or guardian: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

How were parent/s or guardian notified of the accident? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Was anyone else notified? If so, who? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Location of accident: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Accident Witnesses: Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Describe accident giving as much detail as possible: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Describe the measures taken in response to the accident:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Describe physical conditions at time of accident (number of children & adults present, equipment being used, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Signature of Person Completing Report Date

**Thompson’s Station United Methodist Church**

**Permission to Give Prescription Medicine**

 “If a child needs prescription medications which must be administered while on a church trip, that medicine must be sent in the original container with clear and complete directions visible.  The number of dosages in the container will be recorded both before and after the trip.  When possible, that medication will be given to and kept by the adults on the trip.”

This also applies when a child is attending a church function/program and requires medication.

Child’s Name:

Medication to be administered:

Dosage needed:

Times to administer:

**My child requires the above medication. I give permission for it to be administered by a church worker.**

Parent/Guardian Signature:

Date:

**To be completed in front of parent/guardian**

Dosage in Container at arrival time:

Church Worker Signature:

Parent/Guardian Signature: Date:

Dosage In Container at parental/guardian pick up time:

Church Worker Signature:

Parent/Guardian Signature: Date:

**Thompson’s Station United Methodist Church**

**Permission to use photographs on our web Site:** [www.tsumc.com](http://www.tsumc.com) **and Facebook, in newspaper ads, and other church related printed material.**

As we consider graphics for our web site, we want to include church pictures. These will be displayed on the site without names. Please read and fill out the following for you & your family.

Your Name

Spouse Name

Children

* I **do** give permission for any picture with my (our) likeness (es) to be used on the web open to the public.
* I **do not** give permission for any picture with my (our) likeness (es) to be used on the web open to the public.

Concerning newspaper ads, and other church related printed material such as brochures.

* I **do** give permission for any picture with my (our) likeness (es) to be used in newspaper ads, and other church related printed material.
* I **do not** give permission for any picture with my (our) likeness (es) to be used in newspaper ads, and other church related printed material.

**Signature: Date:**

**Please put any comments on the back.**

**Thompson’s Station United Methodist Church**

**Tel:615-595-1855**

**E-Mail:** tsumc@bellsouth.net

**ROOM USE AGREEMENT**

**PLEASE COMPLETE ENTIRE FORM**

Name of Organization

Responsible/Contact Person

Non-Profit Status: Federal ID No.

Address

Day Phone Fax E-mail

Organization’s Purpose

Event Name and Description

Date(s) Requested Start Time End Time

Room(s) Requested

Children / Youth will be present at our function. Yes No (Circle Correct Response)

**We have read and will abide by the Safe Sanctuary Policy of Thompson’s Station United Methodist Church.**

Signature Organization Representative

Date of Request

**Thompson’s Station United Methodist Church**

**NURSERY REGISTRATION**

The following must be completed and turned into a Nursery worker before leaving your child for the first time. We will keep these on file. You must also sign your child in and out each time you bring them to the Nursery.

Parent’s name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

City\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Zip code\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone # (H) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Cell# \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Children’s names ages dates of birth

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

List child’s name and any allergies, medications, health, or learning concerns that we NEED/SHOULD be aware of

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Who has permission to take this child from the nursery? Please do not send siblings.

 Relationship Relationship Relationship

**Thompson’s Station United Methodist Church**

**NURSERY SIGN IN SHEET**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Child’s Name** | **Age** | **Parent** | **Picked Up By** |
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