

OPERATING POLICIES FOR ALL CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

As a church, we believe that the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of children is vital. This policy is intended to ensure that church activities involving children are consistent with the teachings and example of our Lord Jesus Christ and with the Christian tradition of nurturing and protecting vulnerable children.

The primary purpose of this policy is to promote the safety and well-being of children and youth by providing clear instructions about the operation of those ministries at FEFC. The leaders of FEFC expect the cooperation of the adults in our church who must abide by the stringent guidelines of this policy.

Child and Youth Safety Takes Priority – The greatest priority of FEFC children and youth programs is to help children and youth through the Gospel and ministry of Jesus Christ. Any sexual exploitation, abuse (verbal or physical), or endangerment directly contradicts this priority and the values of FEFC.

Workers and supervisors who oversee children & youth must keep this in mind: adults do not have a “**right**” to serve as workers. Adults merely have an “**opportunity**” to serve when selected by the church. This means that workers should err on the side of caution as they make subjective decisions involving the well-being of children and youth.

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY WORKERS

Adequate Supervision of Youth – Church staff and volunteers who supervise children & youth workers are charged with the diligent enforcement of these policies. Violation of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or re-assignment from children & youth work for both volunteers and staff, at the discretion of the church leadership.

Supervisors & workers must immediately report suspected or observed child abuse to the *associate pastor or senior pastor*. Violations of these guidelines or suspected behavior by other workers must be reported in the same manner.

WORKER SELECTION AND SUPERVISION

The following guidelines will be used as Faith Evangelical Free Church reviews applicants who wish to serve in children or youth ministry:

Minimum Age—All workers must be 18 years of age or older. Younger persons may assist adults, but they may not take the place of adult workers.

Confidential Interviews—All applicants must be interviewed to evaluate their suitability for the work they desire to do. Interviews will be conducted by the leader of the program in which the applicant will work or by other persons designated by the Elder Board. A team of interviewers may be used. Church policy and guidelines should be discussed during the interview.

Six Month Rule—Applicants must have been regular attendees of Faith Evangelical Free Church for at least six months.

Application Forms—Applicants must complete and sign an application and the related waivers giving permission to check references and background information. Example of the form is attached.

Survivors of Child Abuse—Any applicant who is a survivor of childhood sexual or physical abuse needs the love and acceptance of the Faith Evangelical Free Church family. A person's experience with abuse and their recovery process may or may not be pertinent to their suitability as youth ministry workers. Applicants who are survivors of abuse may discuss this in confidence with the person who conducts the confidential interview.

Criminal Background Check—conducted using available web based resources.

Auto Safety—Individuals who transport children, who are under 18, for church related activities must complete an "Auto Safety" form. See the Auto Safety Certification procedure.

First Aid Training—Church employees who supervise young people are encouraged to obtain training in basic first aid and basic CPR (or their equivalent if other is offered in the church's locality). Nursery workers and others serving young children are also encouraged to obtain some training in infant and toddler CPR. Other workers are encouraged to get such training if they frequently accompany kids on adventure activities: water sports, camping, home-building mission trips, etc.

Confidentiality of Information—The church will keep confidential all information received in the applicant selection process. Selection information will be marked as such and stored with limited access afforded only to church staff and others with a need to know.

Modification of Policies – Changes in these policies must be approved by FEFC Elders, Administrative Committee, or appropriate pastoral staff. These policies may be modified or withdrawn by Faith Evangelical Free Church at any time. These policies are not intended to create an implied or express contract with any person. They are not intended to create a legally enforceable or binding promise or representation.

Activities Covered by These Policies - All activities of Faith Evangelical Free Church that require church workers acting within the scope of their duties to have custody of persons less than 18 years of age shall follow these policies. Faith Evangelical Free

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Church interprets the above guideline to include but not be limited to the following activities of the church: nursery, Sunday school, vacation bible school, AWANA, junior and senior high youth groups, puppet team, any other ministry to youth under the age of 18.

Orientation – Youth workers will receive an initial orientation into emergency procedures and strategies. Returning workers will be provided an annual update.

Procedures for alleged child abuse concerns. All such concerns shall be brought to the immediate attention of an elder upon discovery. Discretion and confidence shall be maintained for all involved. The elder shall report it to the elder team and determine if further investigation is needed. All such decisions will be documented for future follow up.

Media - No person shall respond to the news media in any way on behalf of the church unless they are the senior pastor, youth pastor in his absence, or the chairman of the elders.

Transportation of children and youth – personnel transporting children for church functions shall be properly licensed and maintain automobile insurance on their vehicles. All operators of such vehicles must be at least 18 years of age to transport on the behalf of the church. All people must wear seatbelts in vehicles so equipped.

Permission forms – shall be completed before participation in off site church related activities to ensure that parents concur in the activity.

FEFC CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY WORKER APPLICATION

Please answer each question. Consistent with relevant law, the information on this application will not be disclosed to unauthorized persons.

Name _____ Date _____
Last (maiden) first middle initial

Have you used any other names? ___ yes ___ no If yes, please list complete name and dates of use.

Present Address _____
Street city state zip

Home Phone (____) _____ - _____ Work Phone (____) _____ - _____

Social Security # _____ - _____ - _____ Driver's License# _____

What age of children/youth work do you prefer?

On what date would you be available?

1. Why do you believe you are a Christian? How does your faith affect your daily life?

Note: This form is to be completed by all applicants (volunteer and employee) for any position involving supervision or custody of minors. This application is used by FEFC to help promote a safe environment for the children and youth who participate in our programs or use our facilities.

- Any applicant who has ever been convicted of child sexual abuse, physical abuse, or domestic violence should not volunteer service in any church sponsored activity or program for children or youth. Applicants with criminal records of other types will be evaluated at the discretion of church leaders.
- All applicants must study and agree to obey the guidelines that are provided for their program and position within the church's children and youth ministry.

FEFC CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY WORKER APPLICATION

Yes No

1. As a church youth worker, do you agree to observe all guidelines and policies regarding working with youth or children?

2. Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offense (felony or misdemeanor, except for minor traffic violations)? You will need to answer "yes" if you have entered into a plea agreement, including a deferred sentence or deferred judgment arrangement, in connection with a criminal charge.

If you have been convicted of such an offense, please attach a statement or explanation, including nature of offense, date, court where conviction occurred, and any other relevant information.

3. Have you ever been reported to a social services agency, law enforcement authority, child abuse registry, or similar organization regarding abuse or misconduct involving children?

If yes, please provide a description of the circumstances, and name and address of the entity receiving the report.

4. Have you ever been subjected to expulsion, reprimand, or other discipline by a church, denomination, or other religious organization?

If yes, please describe the circumstances, and provide the name and address of the church, denomination, or religious organization involved.

5. Do you have any investigation, review, or disciplinary action **pending** by an employer, organization in which you volunteered, licensing authority, or professional association for sexual misconduct, violence, or misconduct involving adults or children?

If yes, please describe the nature of the investigation, review, or disciplinary action.

6. Have you ever been disciplined or dismissed from employment or a volunteer position by any employer? Whether secular, charitable, or religious organizations following an allegation of sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, or other immoral or inappropriate behavior or conduct?

If yes, please describe the circumstances and provide the name and address of the employer.

7. Have you ever been the subject of a civil lawsuit involving, or an investigation or allegation of, sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, or other immoral behavior or conduct, involving adults or children?

If yes, please describe the circumstances and provide the name and address of the employer, educational institution, church, or other organization where the lawsuit, investigation, or allegation arose or occurred.

FEFC CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRY WORKER APPLICATION

Church Activity

Name of church of which you are (check one): a current member most recently attended
 I have never been a member of a church before.

Church name if applicable:

How long have you been attending FEFC?

How long have you been a member of FEFC?

Church Name	Area Code/Phone #	Contact Person	Years Attended
	() -		To
	() -		To
	() -		To

List other churches you have attended over the past five years:

List previous work (church and non-church) involving children or youth. Use a separate sheet of paper if needed.

Organization	Type of Work	Contact Person/Supervisor	Area Code & Phone #
			() -
			() -
			() -

List gifts, callings, training, education, or other factors that may have prepared you for work with children and youth. Use a separate sheet of paper if needed.

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REFERENCES: GIVE THE NAMES OF THREE PERSONS NOT RELATED TO YOU,
WHOM YOU HAVE KNOWN AT LEAST ONE YEAR.

NAME	ADDRESS	BUSINESS	YEARS ACQUAINTED