



“Children are a heritage from the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is a gift.” Psalm 127:4

“Then Jesus took the Children in His arms, placed his hands on each of them and blessed them.” Mark 10:16

CHILD PROTECTION AND MINISTRY MANUAL
Policies and Procedures for
Living Stone’s Preschool and Children’s Ministry and Education

MISSION

Living Stone Community Church (LSCC) seeks to provide a safe and secure learning environment for the children who participate in our programs and ministry related activities so that they may Grasp the Gospel, Grow in God's Grace, and Go for God's Glory so that they may proclaim the excellence of HIm who has called us out of darkness and into HIs marvelous light.



PURPOSE

The purpose of providing these policies and procedures listed in the Child Protection and Ministry Manual is to protect the children of Living Stone Community Church from incidents of misconduct or inappropriate behavior. These policies and procedures also seek to protect our volunteers from being placed in compromising circumstances and/or against false accusations.

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VOLUNTEER ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION

ELIGIBILITY OF VOLUNTEERS

1. **4 Month Rule** - No volunteer will be considered for any position involving contact with a minor until he or she has been attending LSCC for a minimum of 4 months.
2. **Membership Status** - Non-members may serve, as long as 1 helper/teacher is a member of LCSS. The Pastor and Elder may override on an individual basis as deemed necessary.
3. **Teenage Volunteers** - All students working in the pre-school or children's department on a regular basis must be at least 13 years old and go through the 4-step selection process.

4-STEP SELECTION PROCESS

1. **Application** - All volunteers must complete and sign a volunteer application supplied by LSCC. The application will be maintained in confidence on file in the church office.
2. **Reference Check** - LSCC may contact references given by the applicant or others connected to the applicant.
3. **Personal Interview** - LSCC will schedule a personal interview with the applicant and walk the applicant through the Child Protection and Ministry Manual.
4. **Background Check** - LSCC will conduct a nationwide criminal background check at the expense of the church. All applicants must give written consent and provide all the necessary information. The report form will be reviewed in confidence and placed on file in the church office.

PRESCHOOL / CHILDREN CLASSROOMS PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

“TWO PERSON” RULE / STAFFING PATTERNS

The “Two Person” Rules: There must be two workers supervising all programs and ministry related activities at all times.

If circumstances demand that one adult leave the room, doors must remain open. One on one youth instruction or counsel must not be given on church premises without another adult present. We do not allow minors (under 18) to be alone with one adult on our premises or in any church sponsored activity.

LSCC seeks to provide adequate staffing for all programs and ministry related activities to ensure a safe and secure learning environment for all the children. **Each class / activity must have at least 2 workers.** Also, in mixed gender ministries it is recommended to maintain a gender balance.

| Staff- Child Ratio | | |
|--|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Age of Children | Recommend Staffing | Minimum Staffing |
| Nursery - Birth to Age 3 Preschool - 4-5 Children’s Church 6-12 Youth Group 13-17 | 1 adult per 8 children | 1 adult per 10 children |

PRESCHOOL / CHILDREN CHECK-IN / OUT PROCEDURES

1. All children will be released by the Pastor and directed to Children’s Church by their teacher and staff. The children will then be released back to the parent / guardian at the end of the service.
2. All children are to be dropped off and picked up by their parent / guardian when attending other child programs. Workers are to release children to their parent / guardian unless prior arrangements have been made by the parent / guardian.
3. Registration for each child is required at all ministry related activities.

RESTROOM POLICY

LSCC Volunteers should help a child use the restroom only if the child is three years or younger. In this case, a class should go together with both volunteers, or there should be two volunteers accompanying the child. The volunteers should also leave the outer door of the restroom open. If a child is over the age of three, the volunteer should check the restroom before the child enters it and then wait outside for the child.

In regards to a child who presents with a disability or medical condition inhibiting the use of the bathroom or being potty trained, regardless of age, the Children's Ministry Leader will be notified prior to class enrollment so accommodations can be made ahead of time with staffing and develop a plan of care with the parent and/or guardian.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Parents / guardians, Pastor, Elders, or administrative leaders have the right to visit and observe any program or church related activity at any time unannounced.

CLASSROOM HYGIENE

1. Workers and children must wash / sanitize their hands after using the restroom and prior to eating snacks.
2. After children are dismissed, workers are to sanitize all table tops, chairs, and items used.

SICK CHILD POLICY

Children with the following symptoms should NOT be dropped off and will NOT be able to enter into the classroom NOR attend a ministry related activity.

1. Fever (100 or above), diarrhea, or vomiting within the last 24 hours.
2. Green or yellow runny nose.
3. Undiagnosed rash or eye / skin infections.
4. Impetigo, active chicken pox, measles, or mumps.
5. Other symptoms of communicable or infectious disease (open sores, persistent coughing).

Workers are NOT permitted to take the child's temperature. Children who become ill will be separated from the other children and the parent / guardian will be contacted to pick up the child.

If a child is being treated with antibiotics, he/she should be on the drug and/ or fever free for at least 24 hours before attending a program or ministry related activity. If a child becomes ill within 24 hours after attending a program or ministry related activity, parents / guardians are encouraged to notify the administrative leader immediately so that they can relay the message to other families if needed. We desire for all of our children to remain safe, healthy and happy.

FIRST AID AND MEDICAL ATTENTION

We strongly encourage parents / guardians to inform our workers of any special needs, limitations, and /or allergies their child may have. The administrative leaders are responsible for posting these needs so that all workers are notified ahead of time. In the event that a child is injured while under our care, the following steps should be followed.

1. All workers must wear gloves when assisting with injuries involving blood and bodily fluids.
2. For minor injuries, scrapes, and bruises, workers will provide First Aid (band aids, etc.) as appropriate and will notify the child's parent / guardian of the injury at the time the child is picked up from our care.
3. For injuries requiring medical treatment beyond simple First Aid, the parent / guardian will immediately be notified in addition to the Pastor and/or Elder. If warranted by circumstances, an ambulance will be called.
4. Once the child has received appropriate medical attention, an incident report (Appendix C) will be completed in the case of injuries requiring treatment by a medical professional.
5. Volunteers / workers will NOT administer ANY medication. If a child is at an off-campus ministry related event it is imperative that a medical consent form (Appendix D) be filled out completely and signed by the parent / guardian so that proper medical attention can be given if needed. This includes a list of all medications the child is taking. If the child needs medication to be administered, the parent / guardian will be responsible for administration. The administration of the medication will NOT be administered by church volunteers.

A First Aid Kit is located in the Kitchen above the utility sink and in each classroom. Emergency contact numbers are in the first aid kits and an incident report form to record injuries is located in the church office. Reports must be submitted to an administrator and placed on file in the church office.

EMERGENCY PLAN

All workers must be aware of fire safety. All workers must observe the location of the nearest fire extinguisher in the hallway and read the instructions on how to use it. In case of a fire, workers must make sure children wear shoes at all times. If a fire or any other emergency requiring an evacuation arises, workers must follow the emergency plan posted inside the classroom. If the electricity goes out emergency lights will come on and follow the lighted exit signs. Smoke detectors are installed in designated areas and batteries are regularly checked. Workers are responsible for making sure that all children are evacuated. Workers will stay with the children until all the parents / guardians arrive.

In the event of a tornado, classes must quickly move to the hallway (away from the windows) keeping children calm and having them sit on the floor with their heads down. Workers will stay with the children until all parents / guardians arrive.

In the event of an intruder, lock all classroom doors and keep children away from the windows. Stay inside the room with the children until the Pastor and / or Elder inform you it is safe to exit.

LSCC encourages staff to attend CPR class for certification.

OFF CAMPUS ACTIVITY POLICY

1. **Medical Consent Form** - Parent / guardian will sign the annual Medical Consent Form in the presence of a notary once a year. This form will be on file in the church office for the entire year. This form is to be taken on all off campus activities. If the parent / guardian is present at the off-campus activity, the consent form is not required. Any child who does not have a signed form cannot participate in the off-campus activity.
2. **Driving Policies** - All drivers for off-campus ministry must:
 - a. Be at least 18 years of age (preferably 25 years of age).
 - b. Have held a valid drivers license for at least 1 year, qualified for operating the particular vehicle, and have proof of insurance.
 - c. Have no known record of traffic violations within the last 5 years (DUI, suspended license, revoked license, reckless endangerment, numerous speeding tickets).
 - d. Have authorization by coordinator / leader for operating the vehicle with minors.

- e. Avoid giving rides to individual children alone (without another child or adult).

OVERNIGHT ACTIVITIES

Coordinator must follow the guidelines in the “Prevention of Sexual Abuse, Harassment, and Exploitation” section of the Child Protection and Ministry Manual. Boys should NEVER enter into the girls sleeping area and the girls should NEVER enter into the boys sleeping area. Children are not allowed to leave the sleeping area at night without an adult’s permission and supervision.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

LSCC believes discipline and structure are needed for a safe and secure learning environment. The purpose of discipline is always for restoration and correction (*Heb. 12:5-6, 11*). LSCC will provide training for workers in classroom control and discipline without the use of corporal punishment.

Workers are NEVER to administer corporal punishment, even if parents have suggested or given permission for it. Spanking, grabbing, hitting, or other physical discipline is prohibited. Workers are never to verbally abuse, ridicule, or shame a child anytime. Our workers are instructed to implement structure and positive reinforcement within the classroom. If a child is being disruptive, workers are to follow the 3 strike rule.

3 Strike Rule

- 1. Verbal warning will be issued to the child.***
- 2. A second warning will be given and the child will be temporarily separated from the others.***
- 3. Child will be sent to the parent / guardian.***

If disruptive behavior takes place at an off campus event a parent / guardian will be notified and he / she will be responsible for picking up his / her child (distance does not matter). If major disciplinary issues arise, workers must notify the administrator immediately; then, if necessary, take the disciplinary issues to the Pastor and / or Elder.

WORKER EXPECTATIONS, CONDUCT, INTERACTION POLICY

1. Workers are encouraged to build strong student / mentor relationships with the children.
2. Workers must be genuine, honest, and exemplify moral character.
3. Workers must be teachable and flexible to adapt to various work environments.
4. Workers must use sound judgment (including music / movie selections), model Godly behavior, always taking the high road (*Rom. 12:1-2*). If actions are called into question, the Pastor and / or Elder will handle the issue. If major issues arise, the Pastor and / or Elder will exercise church discipline as outlined in the Church Constitution.
5. Workers must be dedicated to prayer and study the Word of God. They must diligently prepare and / or review the lessons ahead of time.
6. Workers are to be team players.
7. Workers are expected to attend all planning meetings and training workshops that pertain to their ministry area.
8. Workers must always be on-time (15 minutes before children arrive) and must not leave until the work is complete.
9. Workers must make sure that their speech, tone of voice, and body language lines up with Scripture (Ephesians 4:29).
10. Workers must not show favoritism, ridicule, or reject a child.
11. Workers must not permit abusive peer activities (bullying, ridiculing).
12. If a worker is absent, it is his / her responsibility to find their own replacement.

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL ABUSE, HARASSMENT, AND EXPLOITATION

LSCC seeks to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all children. Unfortunately, the facts are undeniable, sexual victimization is a very serious problem in our world today. Therefore, LSCC seeks to use all measures to prevent any sexual abuse, harassment, and exploitation. These three types of sexual victimization are defined below:

Sexual Abuse - sexual involvement, activity, or contact by staff or volunteer with a person who is a minor or who is legally incompetent.

Harassment - Sexually oriented humor or language, inappropriate questions or comments about sexual behavior or preference, unwelcome or undesired physical contact, inappropriate comments about clothing or physical appearance, or repeated requests for social engagements, in a situation where there is employment, mentor, or colleague relationship between the persons involved.

Exploitation - *A betrayal of trust in a relationship by the development, attempted development, or a sexual or romantic relationship between a staff or volunteer and another person, despite whether or not there is apparent consent from the individual.*

These three types of sexual victimization are all criminal offenses. It is our responsibility to care for our children and make sure we are not placing ourselves in sensitive and vulnerable situations that may result in charges of molestation. The following precautions will help alleviate groundless accusations:

1. Always observe the “two-person” rule and abide by recommended staffing patterns.
2. One-on-one interactions are sometimes necessary, but they must be conducted in an environment that provides visibility by other adults. Volunteers must work together as a team to ensure this policy is upheld. If a one-on-one interaction occurs and there is low visibility, make sure other workers are informed as soon as possible.
3. Respect the privacy of the individuals.
4. A child has the right to reject displays of affection. Not every child comes from a background in which affection is openly displayed. Therefore, show respect.
5. The administrative leader must carefully plan overnight activities to ensure the safety and protection of adults and children. In NO circumstance will one adult be allowed to be with a child overnight alone or share the same sleeping accommodations (such as a bed or sleeping bag). Workers must hold the administrator accountable.
6. Protect your own privacy, especially when volunteers share a living space with minors. Volunteers should never enter into the living space of the opposite sex.
7. Keep your eyes open for misconduct (including bullying, harassment, suggestive sexual advances) among children.
8. Never invite a child to your home alone or if a child unexpectedly shows up at your house alone do not invite them inside. Always invite a group and make sure there is at least one other respected adult present.
9. Never transport a child alone.
10. Comply with the “Servant Expectations, Conduct, and Interaction” section of the manual.

Inappropriate Advances Occur - Inappropriate advances (to an adult or child) can occur and catch a worker off guard. Sometimes inappropriate advances can occur by accident and other times it may not. In all cases, it is vital that the adult take responsibility for:

1. Telling the child their language or behavior is unacceptable.
2. Telling the leader, Pastor and / or Elder about the incident as soon as possible.
3. Report in writing the incident and what was done and / or said. A copy of the report is to be given to the leadership as soon as possible.
4. The worker may need to sit down with the leadership and discuss what measures need to be taken to prevent a recurrence and ensure parental notification.

A healthy relationship can exist between adults and children, but there must be reasonable limits on physical interaction. Adults are responsible for knowing limits and boundaries.

CONFIDENTIALITY / REPORTING ABUSE AND MISCONDUCT

Since LSCC seeks to maintain a safe and secure learning environment for our children, sometimes it may lead children to share some confidential information. All workers must be prepared to abide by this **Confidentiality Statement**:

The highest level of confidentiality must be maintained at all times in relationships with children. However, there are certain circumstances that other people need to be made aware of for the protection of the child and others. The state law requires us to report any suspected abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services, or we may be held liable, responsible, and subject to charges.

Therefore, if there is any suspected abuse or misconduct to a child taking place within the church or outside the church, it must be reported immediately in confidence to the administrator, who will then report it to the Pastor and / or Elder. These guidelines must be followed:

1. The parent or guardian of the child will be notified.
2. The worker allegedly to be the perpetrator of the abuse or misconduct will immediately be placed on leave from working with the children pending the investigation.
3. Our insurance company will be notified, and an incident report will be completed.
4. Confidentiality for both the alleged victim and the accused will be observed until advised to the contrary by the Pastor and / or Elder.
5. We will comply with the State of Maine's requirements for Mandatory Reporting.
6. We will cooperate with any investigation of the incident by state and local authorities. In the event there is no investigation of the incident by state or local authorities, the Elders will investigate the circumstances of the incident.

7. The Elders should act only in consultation with our insurance company and attorney.
8. Any person who is not found innocent of the alleged abuse or misconduct will be removed from their position with children or youth and church discipline will occur.
9. The Pastor and / or Elder will be the church spokespersons to the media concerning incidents or abuse or neglect, unless directly involved. All other workers will refrain from speaking to the media in order to protect the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.

Questions and Concerns

If questions / concerns pertaining to the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook arise, please contact the Children's Ministry Leader, Elder, and / or Pastor. This manual may be revised and updated by the Leadership Team.

CONFIDENTIAL VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM

This application is to be completed by all applicants for any position involving the supervision or custody of minors. It will help our church family provide a safe and secure environment for children.

PERSONAL

DATE _____

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ M.I. _____

Present Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____ SSN: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Email: _____

Phone: _____ (H) _____ (Cell)

Occupation / Employer: _____

Driver's License: Yes / No License Number: _____ State: _____

Have you ever been charged with, indicted for, or pled guilty to an offense involving a minor? Yes / No

If Yes, Please describe all convictions for the past five years. _____

Were you a victim of abuse or molestation while a minor? Yes / No

- If you prefer, you may refuse to answer this question.
- You may discuss your answer in confidence with one of the ministry leaders rather than answering this form.
- Answering yes or leaving the question unanswered will not automatically disqualify you.

CHURCH

When did you make your profession of faith in Christ? _____

When were you baptized? _____

Please list any gifts, callings, training, education, or other factors that have prepared you for teaching children?

Are you a member of this Church? Yes / No

1. If Yes, how long have you been a member? _____
2. If not, please list your church membership contact information in the first church selection on this form.
3. Please list other churches you have attended regularly during the past five years.
4. Include the type of work involving children that you performed.

CHURCH HISTORY

◆ Church Name: _____

Church Address: _____

_____ Church Phone: _____

◆ Church Name: _____

Church Address: _____

_____ Church Phone: _____

◆ Church Name: _____

Church Address: _____

_____ Church Phone: _____

REFERENCES (Not former employers or relatives)

◆ References Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Phone: _____

◆ References Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Phone: _____

◆ References Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Phone: _____

OTHER EXPERIENCE - Please list all previous non-church work or experience involving children. Attach an additional sheet if necessary.

APPLICANT STATEMENT (Please read and initial each statement)

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. _____

I authorize references or churches listed in this application to provide information (including opinions) they may have regarding my character and fitness for working with children. _____

I release all such references from any liability for furnishing such evaluations, provided they do so in good faith and without malice. _____

I waive any right I may have to inspect references provided on my behalf. _____

Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by the bylaws and policies of this church and to refrain from unscriptural conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of the church. _____

I further state that I have carefully read the forgoing release and know the content thereof and I sign this release as my own free act. This is a legally binding agreement which I have read and understand. _____

Applicant's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Witness: _____ **Date:** _____

LIVING STONE COMMUNITY CHURCH MEDICAL RELEASE FORM

Valid from January 1, _____ through December 31, _____. Initials _____

ALL Information must be provided and form completed and notarized. Please print clearly.

STUDENT INFORMATION:

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ M.I. _____

Present Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____ SSN: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Sex: _____

PARENT / GUARDIAN INFORMATION:

Father's Name: _____ Father's Cell #: _____

Mother's Name: _____ Mother's Cell #: _____

Person to contact in case of an emergency: _____

Relationship: _____ Phone #: _____

INSURANCE INFORMATION:

Do you have insurance that covers this student? _____ Please provide a current copy (front and back) of the insurance card.

Health History - Please list only pre-existing conditions: _____

Name of Current Medications: _____

Doctor Name: _____

Phone: _____

Allergies / Severe Reactions: _____

Dietary Restrictions: _____

Activity Restrictions: _____

Other: _____

PARENT MEDICAL / LIABILITY RELEASE STATEMENT:

The above stated student has permission to travel with Living Stone Community Church, Standish, ME, or attend all Youth Activities from the above stated dates. While I understand that the Church will take all reasonable steps to provide individual care for the safety of my child, I am aware that the Church or their employees and/or volunteers cannot assume any responsibility for injury, damage, or harm that might result during the course of any activity or function so sponsored. In consideration of permitting my child to participate, I agree that full responsibility will remain with me as a parent or guardian of my child. Should any claim be asserted by any person as a result of the acts my child while participating in the course of activities provided by the Church, or traveling to and from such activity, or should my youth assert any claim against the Church or it's employees and/or volunteers, agree to indemnify and hold to the Church harmless from any liability including attorney fees and costs incurred by the Church in defense thereof. I further authorize medical treatment of my child in the event of illness or injury sustained in my absence while my child participates in the course of activities provided by the Church.

Signature of Parent / Guardian: _____ **Date:** _____

Notary Public: _____ **Commission Expires:** _____

Living Stone Community Church
711 Ossipee Trail W
Standish, Maine 04084
(207) 642-2309

PERMISSION SLIP WITH MEDICAL AND PHOTO RELEASE

TODAY'S DATE: _____ **EVENT NAME:** _____

Dates ____/____/____ through ____/____/____ Mode of Transportation: _____

CHILD / PARTICIPANT INFORMATION:

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ M.I. _____

Present Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip Code: _____ SSN: _____ Sex: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____

PARENT / GUARDIAN INFORMATION:

Father's Name: _____ Father's Cell #: _____

Father's Home # _____ Father's Work #: _____

Mother's Name: _____ Mother's Cell #: _____

Mother's Home # _____ Mother's Work #: _____

INSURANCE INFORMATION:

Do you have insurance that covers this participant? _____ Please provide a current copy (front and back) of the insurance card.

Health History - Please list only pre-existing conditions: _____

Name of Current Medications: _____

Allergies / Severe Reactions: _____

Dietary Restrictions: _____

Activity Restrictions: _____

PARENT MEDICAL / LIABILITY RELEASE STATEMENT:

The above stated participant has permission to travel with Living Stone Community Church, Standish, ME, or attend all Youth Activities from the above stated dates. While I understand that the Church will take all reasonable steps to provide individual care for the safety of my child, I am aware that the Church or their employees and/or volunteers cannot assume any responsibility for injury, damage, or harm that might result during the course of any activity or function so sponsored. In consideration of permitting my child to participate, I agree that full responsibility will remain with me as a parent or guardian of my child. Should any claim be asserted by any person as a result of the acts my child while participating in the course of activities provided by the Church, or traveling to and from such activity, or should my youth assert any claim against the Church or it's employees and/or volunteers, agree to indemnify and hold to the Church harmless from any liability including attorney fees and costs incurred by the Church in defense thereof. I further authorize medical treatment of my child in the event of illness or injury sustained in my absence while my child participates in the course of activities provided by the Church.

Signature of Parent / Guardian

Date:

Print Name

PARENT / GUARDIAN PHOTO AUTHORIZATION:

I hereby give Living Stone Community Church and any individual acting as its agent permission to use photography / video of myself / my child taken on LSCC outings and/or events.

Signature of Parent / Guardian

Date

Print Name