

STRAWBRIDGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
KINGWOOD, TEXAS

**POLICY OF STRAWBRIDGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

**Statement of Purpose:**

Members of Strawbridge United Methodist Church (“Strawbridge”) come from a variety of experiences, backgrounds and needs. Strawbridge is committed to providing an environment that is as safe as possible for children and youth who participate in any Strawbridge Ministry. Also, Strawbridge is committed to taking the necessary precautions to protect any person working in a Strawbridge Ministry from false accusations or suspicions.

Members of Strawbridge recognize the need to have formal, written policies and procedures to help (i) prevent the opportunity for the occurrence and/or appearance of abuse of children and youth and (ii) protect Workers from false accusations and/or suspicions. The following policies and procedures are not based on a lack of trust in Workers but instead are intended to protect our preschoolers, children, youth, Workers, employees, volunteers, and the entire church body. Workers are required to follow these policies and procedures.

**Definitions:** the following terms shall be utilized within this document;

**Criminal History** refers to any items reported on a person's criminal records, including arrests, charges, indictments, convictions, probations and deferred adjudications.

**Director** shall mean the person in charge of a particular Ministry. The Director shall be responsible for coordinating applications and achieving compliance with this policy by Workers within such Director's particular Ministry. For the following areas of Ministry, the Director is identified as:

<u>Program / Department</u>	<u>Director**</u>
Children's Ministry	Children's Minister
Nursery Ministry	Nursery Coordinator
Youth Ministry	Student Minister
Music Ministry	Music Minister
Children's Choir	Children's Choir Director
BBLC Ministry	BBLC Director
Directors, Other Staff or Work Areas	Senior Clergy

\*\* Senior Clergy shall be an acceptable substitute for a “Director” who is not available.

**Incident of Abuse & Neglect** as defined by the Texas Family Code – Child Abuse & Neglect ([Appendix A](#))

**Ministry(ies)** shall mean on campus, or church sponsored off campus, activities or programs, involving Protected Persons, including but not limited to those related to child care, pre-school, district and conference youth events, mission trips, Sunday school, and United Methodist Youth Fellowship.

**Protected Person(s)** shall mean children and/or youth, 18 and under, participating in any Ministry.

Worker(s) shall mean a person in a “position of trust” with Protected Persons such as any clergy, staff, Sunday school leader or teacher, employee, program director, youth counselor, hall or bathroom monitor and any other person in a leadership position, who is at least eighteen (18) years old, and involved in a Ministry. No person under the age of 18 shall be placed in a position of supervision over protected persons. Younger persons (less than 18) may be utilized as Worker helpers but shall always be under Worker supervision.

## **1.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- .01 By fostering awareness of appropriate, as well as inappropriate behavior with, or in the presence of, Protected Persons, Strawbridge, as part of the body of Christ, will demonstrate Christian love and respect for one another.
- .02 Strawbridge recognizes that certain Workers have exceptional talents for teaching and supporting the growth and development of Protected Persons, and wishes to encourage them to use their spiritual gifts. At the same time however, Strawbridge has set certain criteria for those Workers who choose to serve in Ministries in order to promote and protect the well being of Protected Persons.
- .03 It is not the intent of the membership of Strawbridge to be judgmental, for we are all accountable to God. The membership of Strawbridge will rely on God's wisdom in developing, implementing and carrying out God's will through this policy. Compassion and truth will be the guiding forces for any investigation, reporting or follow-up action that results from the procedures as outlined in this policy.
- .04 Congregational support is critical for adherence to this policy. The limited nature of our resources, and our desire to devote as much time and effort as possible to the work of the Lord, mandates that this policy be fully understood by every member of our congregation and church family. This will enable church staff and leadership to do what is necessary to preserve the church's resources for the work of the Lord.
- .05 When a legal adult has mental challenges that place him or her in a vulnerable position, or elderly disabled who might not be able to escape potential abuse, the two-person rule shall apply.

## **2.0 BEHAVIOR**

- .01 The following behaviors are prohibited for Workers:
  - Threatening to inflict or intentionally inflicting emotional or physical injury
  - Committing any sexual offense or engaging in any sexual contact
  - Making any kind of sexual advance or making a request for sexual favors
  - Engaging in verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature, including but not limited to back rubs, massages, kissing, or similar contact
  - Physical discipline, such as spanking
- .02 Touching to comfort or affirm a Protected Person in an age-appropriate manner is permitted. Side-by-side hugs are suggested instead of full body contact. Appropriate touching need not be completely avoided, but is acceptable only in public. Workers shall be aware of how it looks and how the person being contacted may interpret the contact.
- .03 The following are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at any ministry:
  - Tobacco
  - Alcohol
  - Illegal drugs
  - Firearms or other weapons
  - Foul or offensive language
  - Pornographic material

.04 The said examples are not “all-inclusive”. Any behavior that contravenes the Statement of Purpose shall be considered prohibited behavior.

### **3.0 WORKER ENLISTMENT AND SCREENING PROCESS**

Persons shall meet the requirements and approvals for service set out herein in order to be a Worker in a Ministry.

#### **3.1 Application Process**

.01 Workers shall complete an Employment Application ([Appendix B](#)) and a Form for Authorization for Release of Information for criminal records check ([Appendix C](#)).

#### **3.2 Certification Process**

.01 A criminal records check shall be made on applicants by an outside source specializing in such confidential screening. Results will be given to the applicable Director. Issues requiring a discussion with the Senior Clergy or designate will be treated with confidentiality. The applicant will be extended the care and ministry of the church in determining appropriate placement for service. Re-checks of each Worker shall be conducted as necessary, with a frequency of at least every two years.

.02 At least two of the references found on the Employment Application shall be checked by the applicable Director. The Employee and Volunteer Reference Check Form ([Appendix D](#)) shall be used to document discussions and findings.

.03 A Texas Dept of Motor Vehicles record review shall be made on all applicants the results of which will be used to assure the applicant meets all of the church’s insurance requirements. Additionally, applicants will be required to supply proof of a valid Texas drivers license and current insurance with a photo copy of each.

.04 Directors shall communicate the substance of this policy to Workers, and Workers shall agree to comply with this policy on the Employee/Volunteer Agreement to Policy Form ([Appendix E](#)). This communication will include the statutory requirements for the mandatory reporting of child abuse and the identification of abuse as defined by the Texas Family Code ([Appendix A](#)), along with Fire and Building Safety ([Appendix G](#)).

.05 Directors may require other operational training as necessary for that director’s ministry.

#### **3.3 Approval/Disapproval Process** (Initial certification and during service in a Ministry)

.01 Sunday School teachers shall be members of Strawbridge for three (3) or more months prior to beginning service. Exceptions will be allowed only if the applicant provides a recommendation letter from a pastor and/or relevant staff person at a prior church of applicant, or if written recommendations are received from three (3) current members of Strawbridge, who have been members for more than one (1) year.

.02 Except as provided for under section 10.0, persons having a Criminal History of any of the following types of offenses shall not be allowed to serve in any Ministry:

- Child abuse, whether physical, emotional, sexual, or neglectful
- Violent offenses, including murder, rape, assault, domestic violence, etc.

.03 Other offenses, depending on how recent, the frequency, and nature may also preclude an applicant or Worker from serving in a Ministry. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Senior Clergy and the applicable Director. In such cases, the determining factors will be the best interests, safety and well being of the Protected Persons. Any applicant or Worker whose Criminal History is such that his or her approval is subject to decision by the Senior Clergy and the applicable Director, will be given the opportunity to explain the circumstances to the Senior Clergy and the applicable Director.

- .04 Workers shall be at least twenty-five (25) years of age to drive and must possess a valid Texas driver's license and proof of current insurance coverage. A copy of each is required to be on file with the applicable director.
- .05 Persons having a Criminal History of DUI or DWI conviction within the eight (8) years immediately prior to application shall not be allowed to act as a driver. Other violations on the applicant's motor vehicle record may prevent the applicant from serving as a driver as required by the church's insurance.
- .06 Lying on an application may result in removal from service in a Ministry.
- .07 Workers who refuse to comply with this policy or repeatedly fail to follow it shall be subject to dismissal.
- .08 Workers who do not attend mandatory training are subject to dismissal.
- .09 Persons may begin working in a Ministry when the application paperwork and certification work is complete and the person is found to meet the acceptance standards.

#### **4.0 GENERAL POLICY**

##### **4.1 Staffing**

- .01 A minimum of two (2) Workers ("Two Worker Rule") shall be present in any room or area where Protected Persons are participating. Exceptions to the above rule include:
  - Escorting Protected Persons between on-campus buildings or in hallways
  - Monitoring the arrival or departure of Protected Persons
  - In cases of emergency care
  - Understanding that there is safety in numbers, in large indoor areas or outside, one Worker can be in contact with multiple Protected Persons so long as they are in line of sight of other Workers.
- .02 If the required number of Workers cannot be obtained for the number of rooms or areas, then the group shall be combined with another group or the Ministry canceled.
- .03 While on campus, there shall always be a Director or their designated Worker on duty while the Ministry is in session that shall make random checks.
- .04 When family members work together (husband/wife/parent/child/siblings/etc.), an additional Worker shall be present. An exception will be allowed only in cases where both family members have actively served in the Church for at least one (1) year.
- .05 At least a five (5) year age difference between the ages of the Worker and the supervised shall exist. To satisfy this policy, persons being closer than 5 years in age to those supervised are not acceptable as Workers.
- .06 At the Director's discretion, and in limited situations, adults who have not applied for approval as Workers thru this policy, may be allowed to work with Protected Persons within a Ministry, however, these adults may not be counted toward meeting the Worker requirements of this policy. Approved Workers shall monitor the activities of these adults to assure compliance with this policy.

##### **4.2 On Campus Policies**

- .01 Doors to rooms shall be kept open or, in the case of rooms with Dutch doors, the top half of the door shall be kept open. It is acceptable to close the door to a room if there is a window to the hallway that allows observation of activities in the room. Under no circumstances shall a Worker be alone with a Protected Person behind a closed door with no window. Doors shall never be locked while occupied by Workers

and Protected Persons, unless such doors are of the “Dutch Door” variety, and the top portion of said doors are left completely open.

- .02 Classes shall remain in the assigned room location. If there is to be a change of location, a sign shall be posted on the door providing notice of any change of location.
- .03 Workers are not required to wear nametags while working in a Ministry, however, directors may require nametags for specific events as necessary. If required by a director for a specific event, nametags will signify by a style or symbol that the Worker is approved under this policy.

#### **4.3 Discipline**

- .01 The applicable Director shall advise Workers on the best Age-Appropriate Discipline Methods Children and Youth ([Appendix E](#)).
- .02 The behavior of a Protected Person who is a constant disruption shall be discussed with his or her parents or legal guardian and the applicable Director. Parents or legal guardian shall be asked to attend the Ministry to observe or control the problem behavior. A Protected Person who is disruptive or a danger to him/herself or others shall be removed immediately by the Worker and the parents, legal guardian and the applicable Director shall be promptly notified.

#### **4.4 Continuing Education/Additional Training**

- .01 Directors shall encourage and may require Workers to attend continuing education or additional training opportunities.
- .02 Directors shall provide refresher training on the substance of this policy to Workers on at least a biannual basis.
- .03 Directors shall strongly encourage first aid and CPR certification so that there may be present at least one trained Worker at all activities and events.

#### **4.5 Communication with Parents/Legal Guardians**

- .01 Workers should attempt to keep open lines of communication with parents or legal guardians.
- .02 Parents and legal guardians shall always be permitted to observe in a classroom.
- .03 Parents and legal guardians shall be advised by the applicable Director where to report suspected abuse or other concerns regarding a situation and be assured that reports shall remain confidential.
- .04 Parents and legal guardians shall be advised by the applicable Director that they must pick up their respective Protected Person no later than ten (10) minutes after the Ministry is over unless special arrangements have been made with the Workers concerned.
- .05 Information concerning the sleeping accommodations for Protected Persons at any overnight event shall be made available to parents or legal guardians by the applicable Director.
- .06 A signed Emergency Medical Release/Parent Guardian Form shall be obtained for each Protected Person in order to participate in any Ministry.
- .07 Parents and legal guardians shall be informed that the protection afforded under this policy ends upon the completion of a Ministry event and that transportation from the event is the parent's or legal guardian's responsibility as is transportation to the event.

## **5.0 ADDITIONAL POLICIES FOR MINISTRIES OF CHILDREN BELOW GRADE SIX**

- .01 For Ministries with Protected Persons through third grade and the BBLC program, the parent shall complete a Child Custody Release form that identifies who may pickup the Protected Person and where the parent(s) are likely to be found while the Protected Person is participating in the Ministry. Only a parent or other person specifically designated by the parent may pick up children. Any person other than a parent and specifically designated by the parent must be 16 years of age or older. Personal identification may be required if the person picking up the Protected Person is not known to the Worker.
- .02 Although some Strawbridge nursery policies are detailed in this policy, additional requirements as written in the Strawbridge Nursery Policy will apply.
- .03 Fourth and fifth grades may be released from Sunday School by the Workers without being picked up by a parent or other designated person. Siblings are not allowed to pick up their sibling from any Children's Ministry event.
- .04 Parents shall provide the Director with any special information regarding a possible child custody dispute where Workers shall pay particular attention to who picks up the child.
- .05 Diaper changing shall be done in the open and not behind closed doors.
- .06 The applicable Director shall maintain a student information file. This file shall contain a listing of the students enrolled in the Ministry with references or remarks as to any parent instructions or special information regarding a child in such Ministry.
- .07 Infants thru 4<sup>th</sup> grade must be checked in for Sunday School and Choir Activities.
- .08 Before or after ministry events, a Commercial Ride Share service can pick-up protected person(s) provided advanced written permission has been given by the parent.

## **6.0 ADDITIONAL POLICIES FOR MINISTRIES OF YOUTH**

- .01 The two (2) Worker rule shall be followed, except as noted below:
  - Planned one-on-one Worker/Youth or Director/Youth lunches: provided they are held in public places and shall only occur if (1) permission has been given by the parent, (2) for Worker/Youth lunches, the Director has been notified, and (3) separate transportation is to be used.
  - Youth/Director conferences: provided (1) the Director informs another Worker at the beginning and end of the meeting, and (2) the on-campus policies are followed.
  - Before or after Ministry events, a Worker may "pick up" or "drop off" a youth at their home provided written permission has been given by the parent.
  - Before or after ministry events, a Commercial Ride Share service can pick-up protected person(s) provided advanced written permission has been given by the parent.

## **7.0 ADDITIONAL POLICIES CONCERNING DRIVING, TRIPS AND OVERNIGHT STAYS**

### **7.1 Driving Rules**

- .01 When one vehicle is used for an event, the "Two Worker Rule" applies. When multiple vehicles are used for an event, a single Worker may drive if the all the vehicles travel together. When multiple vehicles are required, one protected person shall not ride with one Worker.
- .02 Occupants of vehicles shall wear seatbelts. Buses not equipped with seatbelts are exempt.
- .03 Protected Persons, twelve (12) years and younger, shall not sit in the front seat of vehicles with air bags unless airbag can be disabled. Weight and height of front seat riders shall also be considered when determining if young riders should be allowed in the front seat of vehicles with air bags.

- .04 All church bus drivers shall have undergone bus driver safety training and will be subject to annual motor vehicle records review. Driver's License, Insurance, Registration of driver needs to be on file.
- .05 As specified in section 3.3.04, Workers shall be at least twenty-five (25) years of age to drive and must possess a valid Texas driver's license and proof of current insurance covering. A copy of each is required to be on file with the applicable director.

## **7.2 Overnight Accommodations**

- .01 The two-Worker rule is required on all overnight trips, with one female and one male required on every mixed-gender overnight trip.
- .02 When staying in a hotel, Workers shall sleep in separate rooms from Protected Persons; or if necessary for Protected Persons to share a room with Workers, Workers shall sleep in separate beds from Protected Persons so long as any one Worker shall not be alone with any one Protected Person.
- .03 Recognizing accommodations may be restrictive in some cases, one Worker is adequate, so long as any one Worker shall not be alone with any one Protected Person.

## **8.0 WAIVERS AND REVOCATIONS**

- .01 Waivers may be made to the policies outlined in Sections 4.0 through 7.0 utilizing the following procedure:
  - The Parent shall fill out a Waiver/Revocation Form highlighting those areas where the policies will not be followed and the duration of the waiver.
  - The Director of the Protected Persons sign and date the waiver.
  - In the event that the designee is the Director, the Senior Pastor shall approve the Waiver/Revocation Form.
- .02 Parents may revoke any waiver. The revocation shall be in writing and given to the applicable Director.

## **9.0 REPORTING AND INVESTIGATIONS**

### **9.1 Notification Requirements**

- .01 Workers having cause to believe that a violation of this policy has occurred or having cause to believe a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person shall immediately notify a Director. The Director shall immediately notify the Senior Clergy. However, in cases where the alleged wrongdoer is the person to whom notification should be given, he or she shall be considered absent for purposes of this reporting procedure, and the notification shall be made to that person's immediate supervisor.
- .02 Subject to his or her obligation to report such an incident as set forth hereinafter, any person making and/or receiving such a report shall keep the information strictly confidential.

### **9.2 Imminent Threat**

- .01 Where an imminent threat of continued or additional abuse exists, any Worker with knowledge or information about such abuse shall immediately contact another adult and take steps to ensure the safety of the Protected Person. In connection herewith, any needed emergency healthcare shall be provided, such as (1) first aid, (2) emergency services, and/or (3) transport to a hospital emergency room. The alleged victim shall be immediately removed from contact with the suspected abuser. The Protected Person's safety and well being are paramount before any reporting.

### **9.3 Reporting Procedure**

- .01 Workers having cause to believe a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person shall immediately notify a Director. The Director shall immediately notify the Senior Clergy. The Worker is required by state law to make a report to the State of Texas Child Protective Services "CPS". Pertinent portions of the law relating to timing and substantive requirements of such reports to CPS are set forth on [Appendix A](#) attached hereto. Since such law may be changed from time to time, the reporting person shall follow the law covering such reporting procedures which is in effect at the time the report is made.
- .02 Allegations shall be taken seriously and no pre-judgments shall be made.
- .03 Situations shall be handled confidentially with due respect for the privacy of the alleged victim and others involved in the incident.
- .04 The person making a report shall provide only the facts known with respect to the incident.
- .05 The Director and Senior Clergy, together with the person making the notification shall complete an Accident / Incident Report form ([Appendix H](#)).

### **9.4 Responding to the Report of Policy Violation**

- .01 The Senior Clergy receiving a report of policy violation shall:
  - Document the alleged violation
  - Counsel the alleged wrongdoer
  - Determine the necessary corrective actions that may include dismissal

### **9.5 Responding to the Report of an Incident of Abuse or Neglect**

- .01 The Senior Clergy receiving a report of an Incident of Abuse or Neglect shall:
  - Immediately contact parents or guardian of the alleged victim and inform them of the alleged incident. If one parent or guardian is the alleged wrongdoer, the person receiving the report shall not contact either parent or guardian until after Child Protective Services has conducted their initial investigation.
  - Immediately contact Strawbridge legal counsel and insurance company.
  - Suspend the Worker from all positions of responsibility and take additional steps as necessary to ensure that the alleged wrongdoer has no contact with the alleged victim.

### **9.6 Investigation**

- .01 All investigative actions shall be performed by the appropriate legal authorities.

### **10.0 REINSTATEMENT/APPLICATION OF CLEARED WORKERS/PERSONS**

- .01 For reports of an incident of abuse or neglect, where a Worker is cleared of all allegations or charges, the Worker may apply for reinstatement of their position within the church. If such application is made, a committee shall be formed of the consisting of the Senior Clergy, the applicable Director, and the church's legal council to evaluate the option of reinstatement. The committee may approve or deny the request for reinstatement.
- .02 For persons who seek service within the church and who have past cleared allegations or charges of an incident of abuse or neglect from outside Strawbridge, this same committee shall be formed to evaluate the option of allowing this service. The committee may approve or deny the request for service.

### **11.0 MEDIA RESPONSE PLAN**

- .01 The Senior Clergy shall;



- Select a spokesperson to handle dissemination of information to staff, media and congregation. In his or her absence, the Senior Clergy will be the spokesperson
- Have ready for release, a clear position statement outlining Strawbridge's policy regarding any abuse of Protected Persons and the established safeguards

.02 The Church spokesperson shall;

- Use text or a prepared public statement to answer questions from the media and/or inform the congregation
- At all times, the identity, privacy and confidentiality of those involved shall be strictly maintained
- Should anticipate media questions

.03 Guidelines for Spokesperson

- Be prepared
- Be candid and honest
- Be clear, concise and in context
- Do not ask for quote review
- Do respond to calls and questions as quickly as possible
- When an answer is unknown, the spokesperson shall simply state, " I don't know, but I'll do my best to find out the information for you." Never say "no comment"

## **12.0 POLICIES APPLICABLE TO OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS**

.01 Any outside organization, group(s) or individual(s) who use any of the facilities of Strawbridge, shall sign the Indemnification and Release form ([Appendix I](#)) stating that they understand and are in compliance with this policy as appropriate for the Organization's activity. Specifically, in addition to those policies and procedures as appropriate for the Organization's activity, the Organization shall adhere to section 2.0 Behavior, and section 4.1 Staffing;

.02 All certified leaders of the Boy's or Girl's Scouts of America shall be subject to Strawbridge's policy and their own respective organization's rules and regulations concerning safety of those individuals they are charged with caring for. In the event of conflict(s), the Strawbridge policy supersedes all others.

## **13.0 APPLICATION OF POLICY AT CONFERENCE AND DISTRICT EVENTS**

The Texas Conference has developed the Texas Conference Safe Sanctuary Policy. The conference advises that this conference policy be applicable at all district and conference activities involving children and youth. Therefore, at all conference and district events, the Texas Conference Safe Sanctuary Policy shall apply in place of the Strawbridge United Methodist Church Policy for the Prevention of Abuse to Children and Youth.

## **14.0 AMENDMENT TO POLICY**

This policy may be amended as needed and approved by Church Council.

(Approved By Strawbridge Board Trustees – July 15, 2007)  
 Revision approved by Strawbridge Trustees- Oct. 11, 2014  
 Revision (4/25/2017) approved by Strawbridge Trustees- March 19, 2017  
 Revision (6/09/2021) approved by Strawbridge Trustees – TBD MONTH DAY, 2021

## APPENDIX A

POLICY OF STRAWBRIDGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

### Texas Family Code

Strawbridge United Methodist Church

## TITLE 5 – THE PARENT – CHILD RELATIONSHIP AND THE SUIT AFFECTING THE PARENT – CHILD RELATIONSHIP

### Subtitle E – Protection of the Child

#### Chapter 261 – Investigations of Report of Child Abuse or Neglect

##### Subchapter A – General Provisions

##### Sec.261-001, Definitions.

In this chapter:

- (1) "Abuse" includes the following acts or omissions by a person:
  - (A) mental or emotional injury to a child that results in an observable and material impairment in the child's growth, development, or psychological functioning;
  - (B) causing or permitting the child to be in a situation in which the child sustains a mental or emotional injury that results in an observable and material impairment in the child's growth, development, or psychological functioning;
  - (C) physical injury that results in substantial harm to the child, or the genuine threat of substantial harm from physical injury to the child, including an injury that is at variance with the history or explanation given and excluding an accident or reasonable discipline by a parent, guardian, or managing or possessory conservator that does not expose the child to a substantial risk of harm;
  - (D) failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent an action by another person that results in physical injury that results in substantial harm to the child;
  - (E) sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare, including conduct that constitutes the offense of indecency with a child under Section 21.11, Penal Code, sexual assault under Section 22.011, Penal Code, or aggravated sexual assault under Section 22.021, Penal Code;
  - (F) failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct harmful to a child;
  - (G) compelling or encouraging the child to engage in sexual conduct as defined by Section 43.01, Penal Code;
  - (H) causing, permitting, encouraging, engaging in, or allowing the photographing, filming, or depicting of the child if the person knew or should have known that the resulting photograph, film, or depiction of the child is obscene as defined by Section 43.21, Penal Code, or pornographic;
  - (I) the current use by a person of a controlled substance as defined by Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code, in a manner or to the extent that the use results in physical, mental, or emotional injury to a child;
  - (J) causing, expressly permitting, or encouraging a child to use a controlled substance as defined by Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code; or
  - (K) causing, permitting, encouraging, engaging in, or allowing a sexual performance by a child as defined by Section 43.25, Penal Code.
- (2) "Department" means the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services.
- (3) "Designated agency" means the agency designated by the court as responsible for the protection of children.
- (4) "Neglect" includes:
  - (A) the leaving of a child in a situation where the child would be exposed to a substantial risk of physical or mental harm, without arranging for necessary care for the child, and the demonstration of an intent not to return by a parent, guardian, or managing or possessory conservator of the child;
  - (B) the following acts or omissions by a person:

(i) placing a child in or failing to remove a child from a situation that a reasonable person would realize requires judgment or actions beyond the child's level of maturity, physical condition, or mental abilities and that results in bodily injury or a substantial risk of immediate harm to the child;

(ii) failing to seek, obtain, or follow through with medical care for a child, with the failure resulting in or presenting a substantial risk of death, disfigurement, or bodily injury or with the failure resulting in an observable and material impairment to the growth, development, or functioning of the child;

(iii) the failure to provide a child with food, clothing, or shelter necessary to sustain the life or health of the child, excluding failure caused primarily by financial inability unless relief services had been offered and refused; or

(iv) placing a child in or failing to remove the child from a situation in which the child would be exposed to a substantial risk of sexual conduct harmful to the child; or

(C) the failure by the person responsible for a child's care, custody, or welfare to permit the child to return to the child's home without arranging for the necessary care for the child after the child has been absent from the home for any reason, including having been in residential placement or having run away.

(5) "Person responsible for a child's care, custody, or welfare" means a person who traditionally is responsible for a child's care, custody, or welfare, including:

(A) a parent, guardian, managing or possessory conservator, or foster parent of the child;

(B) a member of the child's family or household as defined by Chapter 71;

(C) a person with whom the child's parent cohabits;

(D) school personnel or a volunteer at the child's school; or

(E) personnel or a volunteer at a public or private child-care facility that provides services for the child or at a public or private residential institution or facility where the child resides.

(6) "Report" means a report that alleged or suspected abuse or neglect of a child has occurred or may occur.

(7) "Board" means the Board of Protective and Regulatory Services.

(8) "Born addicted to alcohol or a controlled substance" means a child:

(A) who is born to a mother who during the pregnancy used a controlled substance, as defined by Chapter 481, Health and Safety Code, other than a controlled substance legally obtained by prescription, or alcohol; and

(B) who, after birth as a result of the mother's use of the controlled substance or alcohol:

(i) experiences observable withdrawal from the alcohol or controlled substance;

(ii) exhibits observable or harmful effects in the child's physical appearance or functioning; or

(iii) exhibits the demonstrable presence of alcohol or a controlled substance in the child's bodily fluids.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 20, Sec. 1, eff. April 20, 1995. Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 751, Sec. 86, eff. Sept. 1, 1995; Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 575, Sec. 10, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1022, Sec. 63, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 62, Sec. 19.01(26), eff. Sept. 1, 1999; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 59, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Sec. 261.002. CENTRAL REGISTRY. (a) The department shall establish and maintain in Austin a central registry of reported cases of child abuse or neglect.

(b) The department may adopt rules necessary to carry out this section. The rules shall provide for cooperation with local child service agencies, including hospitals, clinics, and schools, and cooperation with other states in exchanging reports to effect a national registration system.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 20, Sec. 1, eff. April 20, 1995.

Sec. 261.003. APPLICATION TO STUDENTS IN SCHOOL FOR DEAF OR SCHOOL FOR BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED. This chapter applies to the investigation of a report of abuse or neglect of a student, without regard to the age of the student, in the Texas School for the Deaf or the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 20, Sec. 1, eff. April 20, 1995.

Sec. 261.004. STATISTICS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT OF CHILDREN. (a) The department shall prepare and disseminate statistics by county relating to the department's activities under this subtitle and include the information specified in Subsection (b) in an annual report available to the public.

- (b) The department shall report the following information:
- (1) the number of initial phone calls received by the department alleging abuse and neglect;
  - (2) the number of children reported to the department as having been abused and neglected;
  - (3) the number of reports received by the department alleging abuse or neglect and assigned by the department for investigation;
  - (4) of the children to whom Subdivision (2) applies:
    - (A) the number for whom the report was substantiated;
    - (B) the number for whom the report was unsubstantiated;
    - (C) the number for whom the report was determined to be false;
    - (D) the number who did not receive services from the department under a state or federal program;
    - (E) the number who received services, including preventative services, from the department under a state or federal program; and
    - (F) the number who were removed from the child's home during the preceding year;
  - (5) the number of families in which the child was not removed, but the child or family received services from the department;
  - (6) the number of children who died during the preceding year as a result of child abuse or neglect;
  - (7) of the children to whom Subdivision (6) applies, the number who were in foster care at the time of death;
  - (8) the number of child protective services workers responsible for report intake, assessment, or investigation;
  - (9) the response time by the department with respect to conducting an initial investigation of a report of child abuse or neglect;
  - (10) the response time by the department with respect to commencing services to families and children for whom an allegation of abuse or neglect has been made;
  - (11) the number of children who were returned to their families or who received family preservation services and who, before the fifth anniversary of the date of return or receipt, were the victims of substantiated reports of child abuse or neglect, including abuse or neglect resulting in the death of the child;
  - (12) the number of cases pursued by the department in each stage of the judicial process, including civil and criminal proceedings and the results of each proceeding; and
  - (13) the number of children for whom a person was appointed by the court to represent the best interests of the child and the average number of out-of-court contacts between the person and the child.

(c) The department shall compile the information specified in Subsection (b) for the preceding year in a report to be submitted to the legislature and the general public not later than February 1 of each year.

Added by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1022, Sec. 64, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

#### SUBCHAPTER B. REPORT OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT; IMMUNITIES

Sec. 261.101. PERSONS REQUIRED TO REPORT; TIME TO REPORT. (a) A person having cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect by any person shall immediately make a report as provided by this subchapter.

(b) If a professional has cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected or may be abused or neglected, or that a child is a victim of an offense under Section 21.11, Penal Code, and the professional has cause to believe that the child has been abused as defined by Section 261.001, the professional shall make a report not later than the 48th hour after the hour the professional first suspects that the child has been or may be abused or neglected or is a victim of an offense under Section 21.11, Penal Code. A professional may not delegate to or rely on another person to make the report. In this subsection, "professional" means an individual who is licensed or certified by the state or who is an employee of a facility licensed, certified, or operated by the state and who, in the normal course of official duties or duties for which a license or certification is required, has direct contact with children. The term includes teachers, nurses, doctors, day-care employees, employees of a clinic or health care facility that provides reproductive services, juvenile probation officers, and juvenile detention or correctional officers.

(c) The requirement to report under this section applies without exception to an individual whose personal communications may otherwise be privileged, including an attorney, a member of the clergy, a medical practitioner, a social worker, a mental health professional, and an employee of a clinic or health care facility that provides reproductive services.

(d) Unless waived in writing by the person making the report, the identity of an individual making a

report under this chapter is confidential and may be disclosed only:

- (1) as provided by Section 261.201; or
- (2) to a law enforcement officer for the purposes of conducting a criminal investigation of the

report.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 20, Sec. 1, eff. April 20, 1995. Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 751, Sec. 87, eff. Sept. 1, 1995; Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 162, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 575, Sec. 11, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1022, Sec. 65, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 62, Sec. 6.29, eff. Sept. 1, 1999; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 1150, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1999; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 1390, Sec. 21, eff. Sept. 1, 1999; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1420, Sec. 5.003, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Sec. 261.102. MATTERS TO BE REPORTED. A report should reflect the reporter's belief that a child has been or may be abused or neglected or has died of abuse or neglect.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 20, Sec. 1, eff. April 20, 1995. Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 751, Sec. 88, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 261.103. REPORT MADE TO APPROPRIATE AGENCY. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b) and Section 261.405, a report shall be made to:

- (1) any local or state law enforcement agency;
- (2) the department if the alleged or suspected abuse involves a person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child;
- (3) the state agency that operates, licenses, certifies, or registers the facility in which the alleged abuse or neglect occurred; or
- (4) the agency designated by the court to be responsible for the protection of children.

(b) A report may be made to the Texas Youth Commission instead of the entities listed under Subsection (a) if the report is based on information provided by a child while under the supervision of the commission concerning the child's alleged abuse of another child.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 20, Sec. 1, eff. April 20, 1995. Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 751, Sec. 89, eff. Sept. 1, 1995; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 1477, Sec. 24, eff. Sept. 1, 1999; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1297, Sec. 46, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Sec. 261.104. CONTENTS OF REPORT. The person making a report shall identify, if known:

- (1) the name and address of the child;
- (2) the name and address of the person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child; and
- (3) any other pertinent information concerning the alleged or suspected abuse or neglect.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 20, Sec. 1, eff. April 20, 1995. Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 751, Sec. 90, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

Sec. 261.105. REFERRAL OF REPORT BY DEPARTMENT OR LAW ENFORCEMENT. (a) All reports received by a local or state law enforcement agency that allege abuse or neglect by a person responsible for a child's care, custody, or welfare shall be referred immediately to the department or the designated agency.

(b) The department or designated agency shall immediately notify the appropriate state or local law enforcement agency of any report it receives, other than a report from a law enforcement agency, that concerns the suspected abuse or neglect of a child or death of a child from abuse or neglect.

(c) In addition to notifying a law enforcement agency, if the report relates to a child in a facility operated, licensed, certified, or registered by a state agency, the department shall refer the report to the agency for investigation.

(d) If the department initiates an investigation and determines that the abuse or neglect does not involve a person responsible for the child's care, custody, or welfare, the department shall refer the report to a law enforcement agency for further investigation. If the department determines that the abuse or neglect involves an employee of a public primary or secondary school, and that the child is a student at the school, the department shall orally notify the superintendent of the school district in which the employee is employed about the investigation.

(e) In cooperation with the department, the Texas Youth Commission by rule shall adopt guidelines for identifying a report made to the commission under Section 261.103(b) that is appropriate to refer to the department or a law enforcement agency for investigation. Guidelines adopted under this subsection must require the commission to consider the severity and immediacy of the alleged abuse or neglect of the child victim.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 20, Sec. 1, eff. April 20, 1995. Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1022, Sec. 66, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 1477, Sec. 25, eff. Sept. 1, 1999; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 374, Sec. 3, eff. June 18, 2003.

Sec. 261.1055. NOTIFICATION OF DISTRICT ATTORNEYS. (a) A district attorney may inform the department or designated agency that the district attorney wishes to receive notification of some or all reports of suspected abuse or neglect of children who were in the county at the time the report was made or who were in the county at the time of the alleged abuse or neglect.

(b) If the district attorney makes the notification under this section, the department or designated agency shall, on receipt of a report of suspected abuse or neglect, immediately notify the district attorney as requested and the department or designated agency shall forward a copy of the reports to the district attorney on request.

Added by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1022, Sec. 67, eff. Sept. 1, 1997.

Sec. 261.106. IMMUNITIES. (a) A person acting in good faith who reports or assists in the investigation of a report of alleged child abuse or neglect or who testifies or otherwise participates in a judicial proceeding arising from a report, petition, or investigation of alleged child abuse or neglect is immune from civil or criminal liability that might otherwise be incurred or imposed.

(b) Immunity from civil and criminal liability extends to an authorized volunteer of the department or a law enforcement officer who participates at the request of the department in an investigation of alleged or suspected abuse or neglect or in an action arising from an investigation if the person was acting in good faith and in the scope of the person's responsibilities.

(c) A person who reports the person's own abuse or neglect of a child or who acts in bad faith or with malicious purpose in reporting alleged child abuse or neglect is not immune from civil or criminal liability.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 20, Sec. 1, eff. April 20, 1995. Amended by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 751, Sec. 91, eff. Sept. 1, 1995.

## **Texas Penal Code – Section 43.21, and 43.25**

### **Sec. 43.21 Definitions**

- (a) In this subchapter:
- (1) "Obscene" means material or a performance that:
    - (A) the average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find that taken as a whole appeals to the prurient interest in sex;
    - (B) depicts or describes:
      - (i) patently offensive representations or descriptions of ultimate sexual acts, normal or perverted, actual or simulated, including sexual intercourse, sodomy, and sexual bestiality; or
      - (ii) patently offensive representations or descriptions of masturbation, excretory functions, sadism, masochism, lewd exhibition of the genitals, the male or female genitals in a state of sexual stimulation or arousal, covered male genitals in a discernibly turgid state or a device designed and marketed as useful primarily for stimulation of the human genital organs; and
    - (C) taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, and scientific value.

### **Sec. 43.25 Sexual Performance by a Child**

- Sec. 43.25. SEXUAL PERFORMANCE BY A CHILD. (a) In this section:
- (1) "Sexual performance" means any performance or part thereof that includes sexual conduct by a child younger than 18 years of age.
  - (2) "Sexual conduct" means sexual contact, actual or simulated sexual intercourse, deviate sexual intercourse, sexual bestiality, masturbation, sado-masochistic abuse, or lewd exhibition of the genitals, the anus, or any portion of the female breast below the top of the areola.

## **Texas Family Code – Chapter 71**

### **Sec. 71.01 Definitions**

FAMILY. "Family" includes individuals related by consanguinity or affinity, as determined under Sections 573.022 and 573.024, Government Code, individuals who are former spouses of each other, individuals who are the parents of the same child, without regard to marriage, and a foster child and foster parent, without regard to whether those individuals reside together.

**APPENDIX B**

**EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION**  
 Strawbridge United Methodist Church  
 5629 Kingwood Drive  
 Kingwood, TX 77345

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Personal Information**

Name (Last Name, First Name, Middle Name)		Social Security Number	
Present Address	City	State	Zip Code
Permanent Address	City	State	Zip Code
Phone No ( )	Referred by		
Are you under the age of 18 YES _____ NO _____	Drivers License Number & State		

**Employment Information**

Position	Date you can Start	If Seeking Employment, Salary Desired
Are you employed YES _____ NO _____	If so, may we may inquire of your employer: YES _____ NO _____	

**Education History**

Name & Location of School	Yrs Attended	Did you graduate	Subjects Studied
High School			
College			
Other			

**Former Employers**

Date (Month & Yr)	Name & Address of Employer	Position	Reason for Leaving
From			
To			
From			
To			
From			
To			
From			
To			

**References** Give below the names of 3 persons not related to you, whom you have known at least 1 year

Name	Address	Phone	Business/Title	Yrs Known

Continued Next Page





APPENDIX C

TEXAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
STRAWBRIDGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

CONSENT TO PERFORM CRIMINAL HISTORY/BACKGROUND CHECK  
IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE FCRA (FAIR CREDIT REPORTING ACT)

\_\_\_\_\_

Last Name	First Name	Middle Name or Initial
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\_\_\_\_\_  
Maiden or other name(s) used in any and all other records of birth or records of residence.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Apartment or # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

-  
-

\_\_\_\_\_  
\*\*Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_ \*\*Gender \_\_\_\_\_ Race \_\_\_\_\_

Drivers License Number \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Phone H \_\_\_\_\_ W \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Photo ID? Y \_\_\_\_\_ N \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*TO BE USED FOR CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECKS ONLY AND NOT A PART OF THE PERSONNEL FILE.**

**References –Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone Number** \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am an applicant for employment / volunteer work with \_\_\_\_\_ church/division and have been advised that as a part of the application process, the church/division conducts a criminal history background check. I do hereby consent to the church/division use of any information provided during the application process in performing the criminal history check. The church/division has informed me that I have the right to review and challenge any negative information that would adversely impact a decision to offer employment / volunteer work. In addition, I have been informed that I will have a reasonable opportunity to clear up any mistaken information reported within a reasonable time frame established within the sole discretion of the church/division. Under the fair Credit Reporting Act, I have been advised that upon request I will be provided the name, address and telephone number of the reporting agency as well as the nature, substance and source of all information.

The following are my responses to questions about my criminal history (if any).

1.  YES  NO Have you ever been convicted or plead guilty before a court for any federal, state or municipal criminal offense? (Exclude minor traffic misdemeanors).  
If yes, please provide details below.

State: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Offense: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Details of conviction: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2.  YES  NO Have you ever received deferred adjudication or similar disposition for any federal, state or municipal offense?  
If yes, please provide details below.

State: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Offense: \_\_\_\_\_

Details of offense: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3.  YES  NO Have you ever received probation or community supervision for any federal, state or municipal offense? If yes, please provide details below.

State: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Offense: \_\_\_\_\_

Details of supervision: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4.  YES  NO Have you ever been convicted of any criminal offense in a country outside the jurisdiction of the United States? If yes, please provide details below.

Country: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Offense: \_\_\_\_\_

Details of conviction: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5.  YES  NO As of the date of this consent form, do you have any pending charges against you?  
If yes, please provide details below.

State: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Arrest \_\_\_\_\_

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

THIS SECTION IS TO BE USED TO LIST ALL COUNTIES AND STATES OF RESIDENCE SINCE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION OR AGE 18.

CITY/TOWN

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTRY

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT ALL INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THIS CONSENT FORM IS TRUE, CORRECT AND COMPLETE. IF ANY INFORMATION PROVES TO BE INCORRECT OR INCOMPLETE. "ALL OFFERS OF EMPLOYMENT/ VOLUNTEER ARE CONTINGENT UPON APPLICANT'S SUCESSFUL COMPLETION, AS DETERMINED IN EMPLOYER'S SOLE DISCRETION, OF THIS CRIMINAL HISTORY/BACKGROUND CHECK."

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_

APPLICANT (PRINT NAME) \_\_\_\_\_

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

CHURCH \_\_\_\_\_

CHURCH ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

DISTRICT \_\_\_\_\_

AUTHORIZED PERSON REQUESTING CHECK:

(PRINT NAME) \_\_\_\_\_

(SIGNATURE) \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX D**

POLICY OF STRAWBRIDGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH  
**VOLUNTEER REFERENCE CHECK FORM**  
Strawbridge United Methodist Church

(One Sheet per Reference)

Name of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Reference: \_\_\_\_\_

- 1. What is your relationship to the applicant?
- 2. How long have you known the applicant?
- 3. How well do you know the applicant?
- 4. How would you describe the applicant?
- 5. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to children and/or youth?
- 6. How would you describe the applicant's ability to relate to adults?
- 7. How would you describe the applicant's leadership abilities?
- 8. How would you feel about having the applicant as a volunteer worker with your child and /or youth?
- 9. Do you know of any characteristics that would negatively affect the applicant's ability t work with children and/or youth? If so, please describe.
- 10. Do you have any knowledge that the applicant has ever been convicted of a crime? If so, please describe.

Additional Comments:

Reference inquiry completed by (Print Name): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to:  
Strawbridge United Methodist Church  
5629 Kingwood Drive  
Kingwood, Texas 77345  
Attn: \_\_\_\_\_

(281) 360-4500, fax (281) 360-9280

## APPENDIX E

POLICY OF STRAWBRIDGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

### **Age-Appropriate Discipline Methods – Children and Youth**

Strawbridge United Methodist Church

Our goal is to ensure that every child who participates in a Ministry is offered a safe environment where God is the center of all that we do and say.

To do this, we need the children to follow these basic rules:

1. Treat everyone with kindness and respect.
2. Follow directions given by the teacher or leader of a ministry.
3. Stay in the classroom at all times unless escorted by a teacher or leader.
4. Remember, there is no fighting, name calling or rude behavior.
5. Use all equipment properly. Treat property with respect and clean-up after yourself (remember this is God's House)

As parents and teachers we realize that children are filled with energy. However, should a child's behavior become disruptive to the class or any ministry, the following actions shall be taken.

#### **Pre-School:**

1. The teacher/leader shall redirect the child's focus to an activity.
2. A verbal warning and separation from the source of disruption  
Ex: separate children, put toy away, etc.
3. Time-out in the classroom. Use this time to explain to the child why it is important to exercise proper behavior.
4. As a last resort, the parent/guardian shall be located and asked to sit with the child or remove him/her from the activity for that day.

#### **Elementary, Pre-Teen (5-6) and Youth (7-12):**

1. The teacher/leader shall redirect the child's focus to an activity.  
Ex: ask the child to help.
2. A verbal warning and separation from the source of disruption  
Ex: separate children, put toy away, etc.
3. Time-out in the classroom. Use this time to explain to the child why it is important to exercise proper behavior.
4. As a last resort, the parent/guardian shall be located and asked to sit with the child or remove them from the activity for that day.

**APPENDIX F**

POLICY OF STRAWBRIDGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

**Employee/Volunteer Agreement to Policy Form**  
Strawbridge United Methodist Church

This is to confirm that I have received and read a copy of the Safe Sanctuary Policies of Strawbridge United Methodist Church of Kingwood, Texas. Included within these policies is a legal definition of child abuse and neglect from the Texas Family Code and written information describing the Texas Laws regarding the reporting of suspected child abuse and/or neglect.

Worker Name: (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Worker Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX G**

POLICY OF STRAWBRIDGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

### **Fire & Building Safety Guidelines** Strawbridge United Methodist Church

#### **Prevention Measures**

Be alert to any potential causes for accidents, injuries, or fire in your area and during your event. If repairs are needed in an area, (frayed cords, broken chairs/tables, water on the floor, etc.) notify the Applicable Director or leader of ministry event. The buildings, grounds, and equipment must be maintained in order to protect the safety of all.

#### **First – Aid**

First – Aid care shall be administered as soon as possible. First – Aid kits and a guide to emergency care shall be available. If necessary, 911 shall be called for local emergency services to respond. Advance emergency release forms from the parent/guardian shall be obtained granting permission for a child's emergency medical care.

If a child/youth arrives ill or becomes ill (fever, vomiting, etc.) during a ministry event, the parent/guardian shall be contacted and asked to pick up their child/youth.

These steps shall be followed when providing first-aid that involves cleaning an open wound, bleeding cut, or examining the mouth:

- Wear disposable gloves
- Wash hands before and after administering aid
- Use care in disposing trash. Place refuse that contains body fluids or blood in a sealed plastic bag and place in a trashcan with a plastic liner.
- Clean the area with a disinfectant spray.

#### **Accident / Incident Response**

After First – Aid has been administered and the injured person has been cared for, complete a SUMC Accident/Incident Report and notify the Applicable Director. The Director shall follow through with any additional actions to be taken.

#### **Fire Evacuation & Response**

Fire evacuation plans shall be posted in appropriate areas. Workers shall be trained to understand evacuation procedures and locations of fire alarms, extinguishers and flashlights in the event of electrical failure. In the event of a fire, the first priority is to ensure the safety of all persons in your care. Secondly, pull the fire alarm or dial 911. Only if it is safe to do so, *then* attempt to contain the fire by shutting door or using a fire extinguisher. Do not use the elevator for evacuation. Evacuation plans shall be reviewed with children/youth periodically.

#### **Severe Weather Response**

Severe weather plans shall be posted in appropriate areas. Workers shall be trained to understand safety procedures including evacuation plans and location of flashlights in the event of power outages. Do not use the elevator for evacuation. Evacuation plans shall be reviewed with children/youth periodically.

#### **Vandalism & Suspicious Behavior**



Any suspicious behavior or activity shall immediately be reported to the Worker in charge of a Ministry. If necessary, 911 shall be called for local police services to respond. All precautions shall be taken to maintain safety and security. This may include moving children/youth to a safe location, locking doors, etc. In cases deemed to pose an imminent danger to persons or property, no one shall attempt to intervene but shall wait for police to assess and act. After assuring that a situation is secure, the Worker shall complete a SUMC Accident/Incident Report and notify the Applicable Director.

### **Automobile Incident Response**

In the event of an automobile accident during a ministry event, the driver shall first ensure the safety of all passengers, administer first-aid and/or call 911 for emergency services as necessary. After assuring that the situation is safe, the driver shall notify the Worker in charge of the ministry event and complete a SUMC Accident / Incident Report. The Worker shall contact the applicable Director and/or Sr. Pastor. The Applicable Director or Sr. Pastor shall notify parents/ guardians promptly.

**APPENDIX H**

POLICY OF STRAWBRIDGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

**ACCIDENT / INCIDENT REPORT**

Strawbridge United Methodist Church

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

*Name of Involved Person:*

\_\_\_\_\_

Location of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Program or Event: \_\_\_\_\_

*Description of stated or visual Injury:*

\_\_\_\_\_

Description of how incident occurred: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor of event at time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness (s) to Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Procedures followed: \_\_\_\_\_

Other pertinent information: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person completing Incident Report: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Continued Next Page

TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICABLE DIRECTOR OR SENIOR CLERGY

**Reported to Director or Senior Clergy**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Contact with involved person's parent/guardian:** \_\_\_\_\_

Date/time: \_\_\_\_\_

Spoke with: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary: \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact local children and family service agency (if necessary)** \_\_\_\_\_

Date/time: \_\_\_\_\_

Spoke with: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary: \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact local law enforcement agency:** \_\_\_\_\_

Date/ time: \_\_\_\_\_

Spoke with: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary: \_\_\_\_\_

**Other contacts:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

Date/time: \_\_\_\_\_

Summary: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX I**

POLICY OF STRAWBRIDGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH FOR THE PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

**HOLD HARMLESS AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT**

Strawbridge United Methodist Church

**WHEREAS, STRAWBRIDGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH** ("Church"), has allowed \_\_\_\_\_ ("Organization") to use its campus facilities;

**WHEREAS,** The Organization desires to use said campus facilities on a one time or repetitive basis

**NOW, THEREFORE, KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS** that for and in consideration of the Church allowing the Organization to use the Church's campus facilities on a one time or repetitive basis:

The Organization hereby **INDEMNIFIES, RELEASES, DISCHARGES AND HOLDS THE CHURCH HARMLESS** from and against any and all actions, claims and/or damages arising from the Organization's use of the Church's campus facilities;

The Organization hereby represents that it has read The Policy Of Strawbridge United Methodist Church For the Prevention Of Abuse Of Children And Youth, and that it will adhere to all rules, policies and procedures set forth therein as appropriate for the Organization's activity. Specifically, in addition to those policies and procedures as appropriate for the Organization's activity, the Organization shall adhere to section 2.0 Behavior, and section 4.1 Staffing;

The Organization hereby agrees this Hold Harmless and Indemnity Agreement shall include all costs, including, but not limited to, attorney's fees and costs of court;

The Organization hereby agrees that in the event that the Organization is notified of, or should have knowledge of, any action, claims and/or damages covered by this Hold Harmless and Indemnity Agreement, it shall promptly notify the Church's Senior Clergy in writing, and the Organization shall immediately assume the cost of defense of such actions, claims and/or damages.

Executed this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.

By: \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title/Position: \_\_\_\_\_