

# Redeemer Lutheran Church

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*Board of Youth and Family Education*

## Safe Church Policy

Revision 7.0

*Whereas*, we live in a fallen world where the problem of abuse of children and youth is prevalent; and

*Whereas*, we at Redeemer, as a loving and caring Christian response, want to provide a safe environment for the children and youth that attend Redeemer and its programs.

*Be it resolved* that Redeemer shall create a policy designated to reduce the risk of any sexual, physical, or emotional abuse of children or youth at Redeemer and of children or youth in any program under the auspices of Redeemer; and

*Be it further resolved* that Redeemer support this policy with periodic review and updates and with a training program on a regular basis.



***“...We might humble ourselves before our God and ask him for a safe journey for us and our children...”***

*- Ezra 8:21b NIV<sup>6</sup>*

***“Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has given you charge, as shepherds of the church of the Lord.”***

*- Acts 20:28 NIV<sup>6</sup>*

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*“At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” He called a little child and had him stand among them. And he said: “I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven “And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.”*

*- Matthew 18:1-6 NIV<sup>6</sup>*

# **Child/Youth Abuse**

At Redeemer, we rely totally upon God's holy word as our guide for living. We view federal and state laws concerning child abuse to be consistent with scripture and vitally important to protect both our children/youth and the adults who work with them as we 'go' and 'tell' the gospel of Jesus Christ in a fallen world.

These laws serve us by defining the abusive behaviors we seek to avoid when children/youth and adults gather at Redeemer or during Redeemer-sponsored events at other locations. It is our intention, by referencing these laws in our policy, that we may be more aware of unsafe behaviors. We intend to use this awareness to focus our policy on minimizing potentially harmful circumstances from forming in the first place.

Federal law provides a standard for states by identifying a minimal set of acts or behaviors that define child abuse and neglect. The Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), (42 U.S.C.A. §5106g), as amended by the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003, defines child abuse and neglect as, at minimum:

- Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation; or
- An act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm.

In Illinois, we have additional definitions of child abuse and neglect beyond the minimum standards established by CAPTA as amended. These are the laws applicable to our policy here at Redeemer:

## **1) Sexual Abuse (325 ILCS § 5/3)<sup>10</sup>**

A child for purposes of this policy under Illinois law shall be considered an *Abused child* when the person(s) responsible for the child's welfare commits or allows to be committed any sex offense against the child.

## **2) Physical Abuse (325 ILCS § 5/3)<sup>10</sup>**

A child for purposes of this policy under Illinois law shall be considered an *Abused child* when the person(s) responsible for the child's welfare:

- Inflicts, causes or allows to be inflicted, or creates a substantial risk of physical injury, by other than accidental means, that causes death, disfigurement, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function
- Commits or allows to be committed an act or acts of torture upon the child
- Inflicts excessive corporal punishment
- Commits or allows to be committed the offense of female genital mutilation
- Causes to be sold, transferred, distributed, or given to the child under 18 years of age a controlled substance, except for controlled substances that are prescribed and dispensed to the child in accordance with the law.

### 3) Emotional Abuse (325 ILCS § 5/3)<sup>10</sup>

A child for purposes of this policy under Illinois law shall be considered an *Abused child* when the person(s) responsible for the child's welfare impairs or causes substantial risk of impairment to the child's emotional health.

## Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy and Redeemer Lutheran Church, these terms shall have the following definitions:

- ❖ **on-site public event** any activity of Redeemer Lutheran Church occurring on Redeemer's campus where two or more non-related children or youth are under the direction of a leader and assisted by one or more staff or adult.
- ❖ **on-site private event** any activity of Redeemer Lutheran Church occurring on Redeemer's campus where a leader meets alone with a child or youth assisted by one or more staff or adult.
- ❖ **off-site event** any activity sponsored by Redeemer Lutheran Church, but occurring elsewhere and not on Redeemer's campus, where two or more non-related children or youth are under the direction of a leader and assisted by one or more staff or adult.
- ❖ **overnight event** any activity of Redeemer Lutheran Church where two or more non-related children or youth are under the direction of a leader and one or more staff or adult and the event's end time occurs on a date subsequent to the date of the event's start time. The event may occur on Redeemer's campus or elsewhere.
- ❖ **start time and end time** every event should have a *start time* (and day if applicable) and an *end time* (and day if applicable).
- ❖ **leader** a staff person or adult in charge of an event.
- ❖ **staff** a called staff member or employee of Redeemer Lutheran Church.
- ❖ **adult** a person 19 years old or more (volunteer or compensated) assisting with an event and who has signed the "Standards for Children/Youth Workers" statement (Appendix D).
- ❖ **youth** anyone 11 to 18 years old.
- ❖ **youth assistant** any youth requested by staff to function as an adult for purposes of this policy.
- ❖ **child** anyone 10 years old or younger.

# Policies

## *Policy Brief*

1. Adults should avoid being alone with a child or youth.
2. If an adult is alone with a child or youth, the room's door should remain open.
3. If an adult is alone with a child or youth with the door closed for purposes of discussing confidential matters, the meeting should take place in a room that affords a visual check through a window by a non-related adult (Sweep Rule).

## Part A: On-site Public Event

**Policy Objective:** to minimize the potential for child/youth abuse to occur at public events at Redeemer through the establishment and maintenance of guidelines for adult/child/youth interaction.

### **A. Cancellation Rule.**

Any on-site public event should have a minimum of two non-related adults in the building from start time to end time. If this rule cannot be met prior to the event's start time, the event should be cancelled. All events should have a start and end time.

### **B. Two-Adult Rule.**

Two non-related adults should be present in each classroom or other enclosed area during all activities with children or youth. Activities should be conducted so as to avoid isolation of any one leader, adult, or staff with one child or youth. This rule may be waived if either the "Two-Youth" or the "Clear View" rule is met.

### **C. Two-Youth Rule.**

During any on-site public event, at least two youth (ages 11-18) should be present in a room when only one leader, adult, or staff is present. This rule cannot be met by including the presence of *children* (ages 10 & under). This rule may be waived if either the "Two-Adult" or "Clear View" rule is met.

### **D. Clear View Rule**

If an unobstructed view into the room exists through a window or a door with a window, the door may be open or closed during the event. The doors to those rooms without an unobstructed view should be left open during the event. This rule may be waived if either the "Two-Adult" or "Two-Youth" rule is met.

### **E. Sweep Rule**

During any event, one staff or non-related adult should check each occupied room in the facility at least once each hour during the event.

## Part B: On-site Private Event

**Policy Objective: to minimize potential for child/youth abuse to occur during a private meeting (i.e. counseling and mentor program) at Redeemer between a leader, staff, or adult and a child or youth by establishing and maintaining guidelines for counseling and other private interaction.**

**A. Cancellation Rule.**

Any on-site private event should have a minimum of two non-related adults in the building from start time to end time. If this rule cannot be met prior to the event's start time, the event should be cancelled. All events should have a start and end time.

**B. Clear View Rule**

If an unobstructed view into the room exists through a window or a door with a window, the door may be open or closed during the meeting. The doors to those rooms without an unobstructed view should be left open during the event.

**C. Sweep Rule**

When one or more on-site private events are occurring at Redeemer, one staff member or non-related adult should check each occupied room in the facility at least once each hour during the event.

**Part C: Off-site Event**

**Policy Objective: to minimize the potential for child/youth abuse to occur at events sponsored by Redeemer and held at off-site locations through the establishment and maintenance of guidelines for adult/child/youth interaction.**

**A. Cancellation Rule.**

Any off-site event should have a minimum of two non-related adults at the site of the event from start time to end time. If this rule cannot be met prior to the event's start time, the event should be cancelled. All events should have a start and end time.

**B. Two-Adult Rule.**

Two non-related adults should be present in each public place, vehicle, room, or other enclosed area during all activities. Activities should be conducted so as to avoid isolation of one adult or staff with one child or youth. This rule may be waived if the "Two-Youth" rule is met.

**C. Two-Youth Rule.**

During any off-site event, at least two youth (ages 11-18) should be present in a room or in a vehicle when only one leader, adult or staff is present. This rule cannot be met by including the presence of *children* (ages 10 & under). This rule may be waived if the "Two-Adult" rule is met.

## **Part D: Overnight Event**

**Policy Objective: to minimize the potential for child/youth abuse to occur during an overnight event by establishing and maintaining guidelines for adult/child/youth interaction.**

### **A. Cancellation Rule.**

Any overnight event should have a minimum of two non-related adults at the site of the event from start time to end time. If this rule cannot be met prior to the event's start time, the event should be cancelled.

### **B. Same Sex Rule**

If children/youth participants are both male and female, the adults should be both male and female.

### **C. Two-Adult Rule.**

Every event should have a minimum of two adults present at every sleeping area, public place, vehicle, or enclosed area during all activities. Activities should be conducted so as to avoid isolation of one adult with one child/youth. This rule may be waived when the "Two-Youth" rule is met.

### **D. Two-Youth Rule.**

During any event, at least two youth (ages 11-18) should be present in a room or vehicle when only one adult is present. This rule cannot be met by including the presence of *children* (ages 10 & under). This rule may be waived if the "Two-Adult" rule is met.

### **E. Separate Accommodations Rule**

On overnight events that require an adult to share the same room as a child or youth, the parents or legal guardians shall give prior consent. The adult shall not occupy the same bed as a child or youth, with the exception of a parent or legal guardian. Males and females should sleep in separate rooms at events and have separate access to bathroom facilities. When separate facilities are not available, times for male and female use should be alternating and exclusive.

### **F. Age Difference Rule.**

All overnight accommodations involving children or youth must be arranged so that the children or youth staying in each room do not have more than a 4 year age difference, except in the case of siblings.

### **G. Good Night's Sleep Rule.**

Any leader or adult transporting children or youth by vehicle on a day subsequent to an overnight event should have obtained a minimum of 4 hours of sleep the preceding night. In the event any leader or adult does not receive 4 hours of sleep, that leader or adult should not drive children or youth that day. Instead, alternative arrangements for transportation should be made. If the situation can be foreseen by the leader, the alternative arrangements should be made in advance. For

example, adults who did not attend the event could transport the children/youth back to Redeemer.

#### **H. Curfew.**

A reasonable curfew should be established for overnight events for all participants (children/youth and adult).

### **Part E: Travel in Vehicles**

#### **A. Parent Responsibility Rule**

It is the parent's responsibility to make arrangements for the arrival and return of their child or youth from a Redeemer-sponsored event regardless of whether a leader, staff, or adult is providing, or offers to provide, transportation.

#### **B. Youth Travel Rule**

A youth (ages 11 - 18) should not be alone in a vehicle with a leader, adult, or staff in conjunction with a Redeemer-sponsored event (except for related-family transporting the related youth). It is acceptable for one leader, adult, or staff to travel with a group of youth as long as the last two or more youth in the vehicle can arrange to be dropped off together at one location (thereby assuring that one youth is not alone with one adult in the vehicle).

#### **C. Child Travel Rule**

A child (age 10 and under) should not be alone in a vehicle with a leader, adult or staff in conjunction with a Redeemer-sponsored event (except for related family transporting the related child/children). Children should only travel in vehicles with two non-related adults (leader, adult, or staff) present.

#### **D. Parental Acknowledgement & Authorization.**

Parents can authorize Redeemer to allow their child or youth to ride alone with a specific leader, staff, or adult by completing a Parental Acknowledgement & Authorization form (Appendix B) and providing it to the Leader *before* the event. This form demonstrates that the parent(s) acknowledges that riding alone with a specific leader, staff, or adult is an exception to this Safe Church Policy Part E.

### **Part F: Youth Assistants**

#### **A. Youth Assistant may be designated as a substitute for an Adult**

A Youth may be called upon by adult Staff to be a "Youth Assistant" and assume the role of an Adult as defined by this policy. As a Youth Assistant during an event (such as VBS for example), he or she acts in a role that otherwise would have been assumed by an Adult.

#### **B. Subject to Policy**

A Youth Assistant should be considered an "Adult" for purposes of this policy but only as it relates to the specific event for which the Youth was designated as a Youth

Assistant. The Youth Assistant maybe excluded from the Screening Policy (Appendix F). In all other events, he or she is to be considered a "Youth" for purposes of this policy.

### **C. Minimum Age Option**

Adult Staff may specify a minimum age requirement for Youth Assistants on an event-by-event basis.

## **Procedures**

1. **Reasonable Cause.** Illinois Law states that a report should be made if you have “reasonable cause” that abuse or neglect is occurring – this means if you suspect abuse or neglect for any reason. Physical proof or other validation is not required to make a report.<sup>10</sup>
2. **Professionals reporting of abuse.** Professionals are legally required to report any suspected child/youth abuse including child-care workers, clergy, day-care personnel, any school employees, medical personnel, and attorneys.<sup>10</sup>
3. **Protection against claims.** Illinois Law protects the reporter of suspected child/youth abuse or neglect from any decision or award which might be sought through the filing of such a claim. Under Illinois statute, any person participating in making a report of suspected child/youth abuse or neglect is immune from civil or criminal liability that might otherwise be incurred as a result of such action.<sup>10</sup>
4. **Legal and asset representative.** The Board of Trustees is to represent Redeemer as legal and asset representatives of Redeemer Lutheran Church.<sup>7</sup>
5. **Reporting.**
  1. Workers who become aware of any abuse or molestation in any ministry activity should inform one of the following in this order of priority: a Pastor, the President of Redeemer Lutheran Church, or the Chairman of the Board of Elders.
  2. A Pastor, the President, or the Chairman of the Board of Elders should then report this incident to the legal guardian, church attorney, insurance company, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Peoria Police Department, and the Central Illinois District-Lutheran Church Missouri Synod Mission & Ministry Support Center.
  3. The name of the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator should be kept confidential.
6. **Media Communicator.** A Pastor is initially to be the only communicator with the media. However, if a Pastor is unavailable, the President or the Chairman of the Board of Elders is authorized to represent Redeemer Lutheran Church in this particular instance, unless the President or the Chairman of the Board of Elders believes that such representation would be a direct conflict of interest on his part to represent the congregation.

7. **Media Statement.** The following suggested statement is to be shared with the public by the Media Communicator.<sup>8</sup>

***“Redeemer Lutheran Church takes all accusations of child/youth abuse seriously. To that end Redeemer Lutheran Church has notified the appropriate law enforcement agencies concerning this matter and requested a full and complete investigation. As a Christian community, Redeemer Lutheran Church believes in nurturing the well being of all individuals who attend our programs, and we seek to respond in a caring and sensitive manner to anyone at Redeemer Lutheran Church.”***

8. **Training.** The Board of Youth and Family Education will offer training periodically for employees, staff and volunteers.

## **References**

1 Adapted from J. Goldman, M. K. Salus, D. Wolcott, and K. Y. Kennedy. (2003). ***A coordinated response to child abuse and neglect: The foundation for practice.*** Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved August 2006 from

<http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/usermanuals/foundation/foundationc.cfm>

2 Berliner, L. (2000). What is sexual abuse? In H. Dubowitz & D. DePanfilis (Eds.), ***Handbook for child protection practice*** (pp. 18-22). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

3 <http://www.isp.state.il.us/sor/>. Illinois State Police, Peoria County Registered Sex Offenders. Click on the "Offender Search" item on the left-hand column.

4 **Group Publishing.** Church Volunteer Central. Loveland, Colorado.

5 **Gloria Dei Lutheran Church.** *Prevention of Abuse of Children Policy Manual.* Hudson, Ohio July 2004.

6 **New International Version of the Bible.** Copyright © 1984. International Bible Society.

7 **Redeemer Lutheran Church.** By-Laws of Redeemer Lutheran Church. Peoria, IL.

8. **Redeemer Lutheran Church.** Board of Youth and Family Education [BOYAFE].

9. **Lutheran Education Association (LEA).** *Child Protection: A practical program,* David Florine & St. Peter Lutheran Church, Columbus, Indiana. July 2004.

10. **Illinois Compiled Statutes (ILCS).**

[www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs2.asp?ChapterID=32](http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/ilcs/ilcs2.asp?ChapterID=32)



\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Does the child/youth have any condition that would prevent him/her from participation in any activities?

Please list:

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\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Is the child/youth diabetic?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Does the child/youth have any sight or hearing impairment?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Does the child/youth wear contact lenses?

Date of last tetanus shot:

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Please indicate ANYTHING else that leaders should know to help avoid or deal with any situation that might arise: \_\_\_\_\_

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**EMERGENCY INFORMATION: (MUST BE INCLUDED)**

Health Insurance Company \_\_\_\_\_

Policy No. \_\_\_\_\_

Name of another person to contact \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Doctor's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Office Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Dentist's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Office Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**AUTHORIZATION TO CONSENT TO MEDICAL AND DENTAL CARE**

(I) (We), the undersigned parent(s) and/or legal guardians of

\_\_\_\_\_ a child/youth (age 18 or under), do hereby authorize the Redeemer Youth Representative to:

1. consent to medical, surgical and dental care for such child/youth,
2. consent to any diagnostic tests, medical, surgical, or dental procedure or treatment as may be considered therapeutically necessary by the physician, surgeon, dentist or other health care personnel providing care for such child/youth, and
3. on (my) (our) behalf to employ physicians, surgeons, dentists, nurses, and other health care personnel as may be deemed necessary for such child/youth, and/or admit such child/youth to any hospital, clinic, emergency room, laboratory or other health care or diagnostic facility for examination, treatment, surgery, or care and sign all necessary consents and authorizations.

It is understood that this authorization is given in advance of the occurrence of any condition or situation that would necessitate any such medical, surgical, or dental care being required, but is given to provide authority to obtain such care if it should be required.

I hereby expressly release Redeemer Lutheran Church and its faculty, staff, and volunteer assistants from any and all liability (except as may result directly from their gross negligence) for any injury or accident that may occur on a Redeemer Lutheran Church child/youth activity and hereby agree to indemnify Redeemer Lutheran Church and its faculty, staff, and volunteer assistants from any claims arising out of any such injury or accident.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date) Parent/Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date) Parent/Legal Guardian

**Parental Acknowledgement & Authorization<sup>8</sup>**  
Redeemer Lutheran Church - Peoria, Illinois

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child/Youth Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child/Youth Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone Number Work Phone Number Cell Phone Number

I, (parent) \_\_\_\_\_, the legal parent/guardian of

(child/youth) \_\_\_\_\_ grant my permission for my son/daughter

\_\_\_ to meet **one-on-one** in a public venue in sight of other people with

\_\_\_ to travel **alone** in a vehicle to and/or from any Redeemer-sponsored event with

(name of leader, staff, or adult) \_\_\_\_\_

I acknowledge and fully understand that this Consent is an exception to Redeemer's Safe Church Policy forbidding one child or youth to travel in a vehicle alone with one non-related leader, staff person, or adult volunteer.

By my signature, I hereby authorize the above-described situation of my son/daughter.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Legal Guardian Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone Number Work Phone Number Cell Phone Number

# SAFE CHURCH POLICY BRIEF

## Broad Policy Principals:

1. Adults should avoid being alone with a child (10 or under) or youth (11-18) in a room.
2. If an adult is alone with a child or youth, the room's door should remain open.
3. If an adult is alone with a child or youth and the door is closed, they should remain visible through a window to others outside the room.

## Events at Redeemer:

1. Every event should have a starting and ending time.
2. Every event should have 2 non-related adults on-site to avoid isolation of one adult and one child or youth during the event.

## Events at other places:

1. Every event should have a starting and ending time.
2. Every event should have 2 non-related adults on-site or 2 youth present to avoid isolation of one adult and one youth during the event.
3. Every event should have 2 non-related adults on-site when children are involved.

## Overnight events:

1. All rules of "Events at other places" apply.
2. If youth are both male and female, adults should be both male and female.
3. Male and female sleeping quarters should be separate and grouped by age.
4. Male and female bathrooms and changing areas should be separate or alternating and exclusive if facilities must be shared.
5. A reasonable curfew shall be established for "lights-out".
6. Adult leaders with very little sleep should not transport youth the following day.

## Travel in vehicles:

1. Parents are responsible for the arrival and return of their child/youth from any event.
2. A youth should not travel alone with an adult to, from, or during any event (except for related-family transporting the related youth).
3. Any vehicle transporting children should have 2 non-related adults present (except for related-family transporting the related child/children).
4. A Parental Authorization form is available allowing a child or youth to travel alone with a specific adult.

## Some Example Situations

<b>Situation</b>	<b>Acceptable?</b>	<b>Why?</b>
After event, DCE and youth are alone at church waiting for parents pick up.	NO	Two non-related adults must be on-site.
Confirmation youth meeting with his/her mentor at church alone in room with door closed.	DEPENDS	Yes, if non-related adult is on-site and room is visible through window -- otherwise not acceptable.
VBS teacher in class (door closed no window) with 3 7th graders.	YES	At least two youth 12 years or older are present.
VBS teacher in class (door closed no window) with 12 1st graders.	NO	Children (under 12) should not be alone with an adult unless outside adults can see into the room.

Youth stops by DCE's office for counseling during the day (door closed with window)	YES	As long as there are other adults passing outside who can see into room.
DCE and spouse lead first grade event in Life Center. No other adults on premises.	NO	The two adults are related. Another non-related adult is needed.
Adult leader volunteers to drive group of 3 teens home from youth event.	YES	Two or more youth are present in the vehicle.
Adult leader drives 3 youth home from event dropping off each youth at their home .	NO	The last youth to be dropped off is alone with the adult. Instead, perhaps the last 2 could be dropped off together.
Sunday morning childcare teen is alone with 3 infants while assistant is in bathroom.	YES	Nursery windows make it visible to others passing outside on a busy Sunday morning.
At youth event at a lodge, girls and boys stay in separate rooms but the rooms share a bathroom.	DEPENDS	Yes, if rules are established for separate and exclusive use by male and female otherwise No.
DCE leads an event at the zoo for 4th graders with 2 adult assistants but 3 children arrive before the assisting adults show up.	NO	When the first child arrives that parent should stay until the assisting adults arrive. If another adult can't be found the event should be cancelled.
DCE and 2 adults drive 3 cars transporting 9 youth to a lock-in. The DCE and one adult stay up all night with the kids. The other adult sleeps badly for 5 hours in a sleeping bag. The next day all three are set to drive back.	NO	The adult with 5 hours of sleep may drive but those who did not get sleep should not drive youth. Another adult should drive in to pick up the youth leaving the 2 tired leaders to drive themselves home if they wish.
At a weekend youth camping event, no mention was made of when "lights out" was to occur.	NO	A reasonable curfew should be in place prior to the event and can change at the discretion of the leader.
An adult leader lives close to a 6th grader who attends youth group. As a courtesy the parent offers to transport the child to church. The leader has the parents sign an authorization form prior to leaving with the child.	YES	A parent may give explicit consent for a specific adult to travel alone with their child or youth.

## Standards for Children/Youth Workers

Redeemer Lutheran Church – Peoria, Illinois

We welcome your involvement with the Children (age 10 or under) and/or Youth (age 11-18) of Redeemer. Every young person needs many adults in their lives to care about them, teach and encourage them. Your time spent working with our young people is valuable. These standards reflect the policies of the Board of Youth and Family Education (BOYAFE) to insure these experiences are positive events for everyone. They have been established to protect you, the children and youth, and the congregation and are in effect at every event involving children or youth sponsored by Redeemer Lutheran Church.

1. Hugging or putting an arm around a child or youth are gestures that show you care and are appropriate in group settings. Avoid repeated one-on-one contact and show the same genuine affection to all children and youth.
2. Avoid all genital/breast contact.
3. Verbal comments or jokes with sexual innuendo are not appropriate. Profanity and harsh language is prohibited as well as excessive teasing of any one person.
4. A minimum of 2 non-related adults should be present during the entire event.
5. Children, youth, and adults should always remain with the group. Never meet with a young person alone in a home.
6. Use of alcohol, drugs and illegal substances is forbidden at all events. Adults should refrain from smoking in front of children or youth.
7. Proper clothing for activities is required by adults, children and youth. No t-shirts with anti-Christian, alcohol, drug, or sexual themes are allowed. No revealing clothing is allowed.
8. If any adult, youth, or child is behaving in a manner that makes you feel uncomfortable or violates any of the above rules or the Safe Church Policy, it is your responsibility to report it to a leader, Director of Youth Ministry, or a Pastor as soon as possible.

 Signature \_\_\_\_\_  Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN/YOUTH**

As an ever-increasing number of people use and prefer electronic communications over other forms, it is essential that the church be present in this mission field. Social networking sites, on-the-spot communication devices and email can enhance communication, faith sharing, and deepen relationships. The following Principles and Guidelines apply commonly accepted practices of healthy boundaries, safe church, and responsible parenting concerning electronic communication with children/youth (age 18 and younger) and must be followed at all times.

### **Redeemer's Principles of Healthy Boundaries and Safe Church**

-In electronic communications, healthy boundaries and the Redeemer Lutheran Church Safe Church Policy (including the Appendices thereto) must be adhered to.

-Regardless of your privacy settings, you should assume that anything on social media could be read by anyone at any time.

- Adults (age 19 and older) should recognize that they are automatically in a position of superiority and influence. Therefore, adults must be cognizant that children/youth may not feel they have the power to decline communication and/or they may feel pressure to respond.

- For church employees, staff and volunteers, all the principles above apply, but there is an additional level of influence. Church employees, staff and volunteers need to be extremely diligent in considering what their communication is saying and how it could be interpreted by the person to whom it is sent.

-Laws regarding mandated reporting of suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation of children/youth apply with electronic communication as they do in the physical world.

### **Redeemer's Guidelines for Electronic Interactions with Children/Youth**

-We strongly encourage parents to have open access to and regularly check all electronic communications of their children/youth.

-Social networking groups for children/youth must be accessible to parents of the child/youth involved.

-If possible, all groups with children/youth should strive to have 2 non-related adults as administrators.

-Adults are forbidden from initiating "friend" requests to children/youth, but may accept "friend" requests from a child/youth.

-Adults are forbidden from initiating video chats with children/youth.

-If posting a prayer request, the individual should gain permission from the person or family first.

-Acceptable hours for all communication with children/youth are between 7:00am-10:00pm. Communication outside of the acceptable hours may be used only in emergency situations or to communicate time sensitive information. Good judgment should be exercised during school hours.

-Any adult initiating electronic communication with an individual child/youth, when no other individual is included, is allowed to send a maximum of two electronic contacts (e.g., email, texts, Facebook private messages, etc.) until the adult has received a response from the child/youth. Once a response is received from the child/youth, electronic communication can continue as long as the child/youth continues to respond. At any point that two electronic messages have been sent by the adult without a response from the child/youth, individual electronic communication to the child/youth from the adult must cease for a period of one week. However, if necessary, the adult may follow up with a phone call if necessary.

-If parents are uncomfortable with any communication, they are expected to immediately begin conversation with the individual of concern and/or the appropriate church staff member.

-If children/youth are uncomfortable with any communication, they are expected to immediately share this with their parents. Parents should then begin conversation with the individual of concern and/or the appropriate church staff member.

-All church employees, staff and volunteers engaged in ministry or any other activities or contact with children/youth should consider the content and nature of any post that will be read or visible to children/youth. Be aware that your "voice" is often perceived as the voice of the church at large.

Failure to follow these Guidelines could:

- Set back the work of advancing God's Kingdom through the mission of Redeemer
- Affect our ability to minister most effectively to our members and others
- Get you disciplined or fired or removed from your position

If in doubt, talk to your supervisor, a Pastor, and/or the Business Manager.

# Redeemer Screening Policy for Employees, Staff and Volunteers

## I. Purpose:

- A. The purpose of the Screening procedure for a current employee, staff or volunteer of Redeemer Lutheran Church is to determine whether he or she should continue as such and whether he or she should be allowed to minister to or otherwise have ongoing or periodic contact with children/youth through ministries of Redeemer Lutheran Church.
- B. The purpose of the Screening procedure for an applicant to become an employee, staff or volunteer of Redeemer Lutheran Church is to determine whether he or she is suitable for such position and whether he or she should be allowed to minister to or otherwise have ongoing or periodic contact with children/youth through ministries of Redeemer Lutheran Church.
- C. The focus of the investigation will normally be on criminal and driving records, including, but not limited to, abuse, assault, battery, rape, any crime of a sexual nature (including possession or dissemination of child pornography), homicide, manslaughter in any degree, attempted murder, domestic violence, child/youth neglect, drug crimes, animal cruelty, theft, robbery, forgery, fraud, kidnapping, arson, weapons violations, any crime involving children/youth as either an accomplice or a victim, driving under the influence, driving without a license, suspended driving license, serious driving violations, and numerous repeat driving violations. Other criminal or driving violations will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

In addition, for further certain employee and staff positions, Redeemer Lutheran Church, in its discretion, may also cause a consumer report and/or an investigative consumer report to be generated that may include, but is not limited to: verification of social security number, credit reports, current and previous residences, employment history, education background, character references, drug testing, civil and criminal history records from any justice agency in any federal, state, or county jurisdiction, birth records, and any other public record.

## II. Requirements:

- A. This Policy applies to (i) all adult employees and staff\*; (ii) adult volunteers that have ongoing or periodic contact with “children” (age 10 or under) or “youth” (age 11-18), including, but not limited to, Nursery Staff, Sunday School Teachers, Oasis Teachers, VBS Workers, Confirmation Mentors, Confirmation Small Group Leaders, Child/Youth Ministry Volunteers, and ongoing pantry volunteers; and (iii) applicants to become (i) or (ii) above. Redeemer Lutheran Church retains the discretion to determine which types of volunteers and activities this Policy applies to.

\*This excludes Redeemer Lutheran Preschool and Childcare staff when serving in stated capacity. The Preschool and Childcare staff follows all mandated background checks and fingerprints set forth by the Department of Children and Family Services.

- B. Persons covered by this Policy must complete the Screening procedure which includes:
- a. **Read** and commit to follow (i) the Redeemer Safe Church Policy and all Appendices thereto (as modified from time to time), and (ii) all other policies that may be added in the future to this Policy or the Redeemer Safe Church Policy.
  - b. **Sign** the electronic Authorization for Background Investigation and Consent to Follow Policies form attached as Attachment 1 to this Policy.
  - c. **Complete** the Child Safety Video Training and Quiz via Protect My Ministries.
  - d. This required Screening procedure will re-occur every four years for all employees and staff and will re-occur every four years for all volunteers who continue to work with children or youth.

### III. Screening Procedure:

- A. All information given by the employee, staff, volunteer or applicant and received through the screening procedure will be held confidential. Protecting the reputation of our employees, staff, volunteers, and applicants is a high priority. This is why we are using a third party (currently Protect My Ministries) and electronic storage via their servers. The goal is to keep paperwork to a minimum, though employee, staff, volunteer and applicant information may be stored onsite at Redeemer Lutheran Church. Persons reviewing the information besides employees and agents of the third party reviewer will include a Redeemer Lutheran Church initial screener, typically a current or former law enforcement officer or attorney, and may also include one or more pastors, other called-staff members who in their installation vows have taken oaths of confidentiality, and one or more Church leaders.
- B. As part of the screening procedure, if the Redeemer Lutheran Church reviewing team needs additional information or an explanation from the employee, staff, volunteer or applicant about the results of a screening, or if the team makes a determination to terminate the services of the employee, staff, or volunteer, or to deny an applicant's application, such person will be informed of the decision. At the request of the team or such person, at least two members of the reviewing team will meet with such person to obtain the information and/or explain the decision. Unless the Redeemer Lutheran Church reviewing team, in its discretion, determines to modify its initial decision, such decision shall be final.

## AUTHORIZATION FOR BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION AND CONSENT TO FOLLOW POLICIES

Go to [www.ministryopportunities.org/RedeemerPeoria](http://www.ministryopportunities.org/RedeemerPeoria) to begin the Redeemer Lutheran Screening process.

- There you will enter the information in the application form (seen below), read the Safe Church Policy for education after clicking next, then sign your consent to perform the background investigation and thereby also consent to follow the policies and finally complete the Child Safety training.

### Application Form

Please enter your information within the next 40 minutes

\* This online application is protected by a Secure Certificate Authority supports up to a TLS1.2 256-bit encryption process. This process can be verified using your browsers security token information page. All information provided on this form is secure. For more information on how to access this information, please contact us.

Full Legal Name:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	First	Middle	Last
Other Names Used:	<input type="checkbox"/> Check this box to enter other names you may have been known as in the past, such as your maiden name.		
Current Address Since:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
	(MM/DD/YYYY)	Street, apartment, etc.	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	City	State	Zip
Previous Address From:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
	(MM/DD/YYYY)	Street, apartment, etc.	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	City	State	Zip
Previous Address From:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
	(MM/DD/YYYY)	Street, apartment, etc.	
	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	City	State	Zip
Social Security Number:	<input type="text"/>	* (###-##-####) Required Only for Identity Verification Purposes	
Date of Birth:	<input type="text"/>	* (MM/DD/YYYY) Required Only for Identity Purposes	
Ethnicity:	<input type="text" value="Race/Ethnicity Unknown"/>		
Gender:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Female <input type="radio"/> Male		
Phone Number:	<input type="text"/>	* (###)###-####	
Email:	<input type="text"/>		
Drivers License:	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Number	State	

**Next >**

*It is understood that by clicking next I am consenting that the information contained in this form is correct to the best of my knowledge.*

*The next page will include the Safe Church Policy, including the Appendices thereto. Read these policies and near the bottom you will indicate your consent to follow the policies. Then you will authorize for a background investigation.*

## CONSENT TO FOLLOW POLICIES

I hereby acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the Redeemer Lutheran Church Safe Church Policy, including the Appendices thereto, as in effect on the date of my signature.

If I am currently an employee, staff or volunteer of Redeemer Lutheran Church, I hereby agree and consent to fully follow the Redeemer Lutheran Church Safe Church Policy, including all Appendices thereto, as in effect on the date of my signature, and as modified and communicated to me from time to time.

If I am an applicant to become an employee, staff or volunteer of Redeemer Lutheran Church, and if I am accepted to become an employee, staff or volunteer of Redeemer Lutheran Church, I hereby agree and consent to fully follow the Redeemer Lutheran Church Safe Church Policy, including all Appendices thereto, as in effect on the date of such acceptance, and as modified and communicated to me from time to time.

I understand that failure to fully follow such Policy may result in my discipline, termination of employment, or termination as a volunteer.

## **AUTHORIZATION FOR BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION**

I hereby authorize Redeemer Lutheran Church and its designated agents and representatives to conduct an investigation of my background for employment and/or volunteer purposes.

I understand and agree that the focus of this investigation will normally be on criminal and driving history and records.

In addition, for further certain employee and staff positions, Redeemer Lutheran Church, in its discretion, may also cause a consumer report and/or an investigative consumer report to be generated that may include, but is not limited to: verification of social security number, credit reports, current and previous residences, employment history, education background, character references, drug testing, civil and criminal history records from any justice agency in any federal, state, or county jurisdiction, birth records, and any other public record.

I hereby further authorize any individual, company, firm, corporation, or public agency (including the Social Security Administration and law enforcement agencies) to divulge any and all information, verbal or written, pertaining to me, to Redeemer Lutheran Church or its agents.

I hereby further authorize the complete release of any records or data pertaining to me which the individual, company, firm, corporation, or public agency may have, including information or data received from other sources.

I understand that Redeemer Lutheran Church and its designated agents and representatives shall maintain all information received from this Authorization in a confidential manner in order to protect my personal information.



**I agree**

**Full name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** *auto-filled*

By checking the 'I agree' box and entering my full name I recognize that this is the equivalent to my legal signature.