



## SAFETY & SECURITY GUIDELINES

### CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

### BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

1. Every adult volunteer working within the CYF ministry who has contact with children or youth\* on a regular basis will complete the volunteer application process.
2. Volunteers will participate in training sessions regarding best practices with children/youth.
3. Children and youth must have parental permission for involvement in church-sponsored programs or activities when the parent/guardian is not present.
4. Use the *Rule of 3*, no fewer than three people should be present in a room at any given time.
5. Use the "open door" rule, meaning that whenever meeting with minors, the door to the room is open, anyone passing by the room may hear or see what is happening, and there is another adult in the building. If a one-to-one meeting is needed, that meeting should be held in a public space in view of others.
6. Random and frequent supervisory visits are made to all classrooms or small groups.
7. Volunteers should take children to the restroom in groups, if possible, and assist children only if they ask. Parents are encouraged to take their children to the restroom before class begins. **Please note:** Volunteers should never be alone with a child in the stall of a restroom with the door closed.
8. Injury Reporting: Injuries requiring care are recorded on an Accident/Incident Report (found with first aid kits) and turned in to the appropriate CYF staff. First aid kits are located at the CYF desk in the narthex, the kitchen in Bethel Hall, SS supply room (209) on the second floor, and Youth Hall in the lower level.
9. Photos/Videos: Photos and video of children/youth are only allowed with written permission from the parent/guardian. Any photos or video taken should be shared with CYF Staff via email or text for the purpose of verifying parental permission for use. Photos and videos should not be posted on personal internet accounts.
10. Social media/private messaging:
11. Disruptive Behavior: When behavior prevents children from learning, teachers should respectfully work with the child to help them to participate appropriately. If initial interventions are not successful, contact CYF staff so that the staff can assist in resolving any issues. Students should not be separated from the class without CYF staff knowledge. Teachers are encouraged to let parents know of these behaviors as well. All children, youth and volunteers should be treated with respect and dignity at all times.
12. Individuals working with children and youth are encouraged to create and maintain a spirit of cooperation and mutual support. If questionable behavior is observed, it should be addressed by reporting to CYF staff or a Pastor.

13. Reporting Child Abuse/Child Neglect: Volunteers must report any signs of child abuse or neglect to a Pastor or CYF Staff person who will assist with reporting to Olmsted County Child Protection and Welfare Services.

***Child Abuse:** Any physical or mental injury or threatened injury inflicted by a person responsible for the child's care on a child other than by accidental means; or physical injury that cannot reasonably be explained by the child's history of injuries (MN Statute: 626.556 Subd. 2d).*

***Child Neglect:** Failure by a person responsible for a child's care to supply a child necessary food, clothing, shelter, or medical care when reasonably able to do so; or failure to protect a child from actions or conditions which imminently and seriously endanger the child's physical or mental health when reasonably able to do so; or failure to take steps to ensure that a child is educated in accordance with state law. Neglect also includes prenatal exposure to a controlled substance. (MN Statute 626.556, Subd. 2c).*

14. Supervision of children/youth will be maintained after all events until all children/youth are in the custody of a parent or guardian. The *Rule of 3* must be followed until all children/youth have left the premises.
15. Volunteers wishing to hold events on the church premises at alternate times or off church premises must notify an appropriate CYF staff member. These events require parental permission and two adult leaders.
16. Driver Check Policy: Volunteer chaperones and staff transporting children and youth by vehicle must be age 21 or older and pass a driver history check. Individuals whose driver history check identifies adverse driving history will be prohibited from transporting children and youth by vehicle. Examples of adverse driving history that will result in prohibition include, but are not limited to, a driver's license suspension or revocation, a conviction for DUI or similar offense, (\*\*a moving violation or) pattern of moving violations which, in the discretion of the CYF staff member, demonstrate adverse driving history.

**\*Defining Language:** References to *children / youth* in this document refers to those under the age of eighteen.