

**The Wesleyan Church of North America
The Wesleyan Church of Canada**

GUIDELINES FOR CHILD PROTECTION

(Recommended for use by local churches)

Introduction:

The Wesleyan Church Canada, is part of the Wesleyan Church of North America which, as of 2017 encompasses 30 districts and more than 1600 local churches and affiliated Wesleyan ministries. Most, if not all, local churches offer programs and activities designed to meet the needs of children or which include children as do many Wesleyan affiliated entities. As Wesleyans, we consider children to be a gift from God and the future of our church. During their tender formative years, it is very important that we make a concerted and educated effort to safeguard children in our care and supervision from harms all too present in the world today. The General Church and the National Church of Canada is committed to do all that it can to keep children safe and asks each District and local church to do likewise. Becoming educated about child abuse, instituting procedures to minimize incidents of abuse, and knowing what to do if abuse is suspected is the core of these Guidelines. Adoption of Guidelines for Child Protection (“Guidelines”) by all organizations whose work includes children such as local churches, camps, daycare centers and schools is strongly advised.

The Wesleyan Church recognizes and respects the autonomy of the districts, local churches and other Wesleyan entities. Nonetheless, the faith, actions and concerns of the local churches are intrinsically intertwined with the districts, National and General Church especially regarding liabilities that stem from any local occurrence that results in harm to a child.

As such, the General Board of Administration has approved these comprehensive Guidelines for Child Protection in template form for possible use by local churches. Though the national church encourages but does not require each local church to adopt these Guidelines, it is our hope that by providing these Guidelines in template form, sample forms, child protection training resources and sources for background checks, the tasks associated with adoption of such guidelines will be lighter for the adopting local churches and Wesleyan entities. This template has been designed to be specific in its guidance at the local level while allowing for flexibility given the differing circumstances and makeup of each congregation and Wesleyan entity. It is important to note that each jurisdiction has its own child protection laws. These laws and perhaps a local attorney should be consulted to ensure that any guidelines adopted by a local church are in compliance with that Provincial or State’s laws.

I. Purpose – The _____ (insert the church or affiliate name here) (hereinafter, the “Church”) has a sacred desire to keep our children and youth safe from harm. The purpose of these Guidelines for Child Protection (these “Guidelines”) is to raise awareness, provide information and set out procedures designed to protect children, youth, and their families from abuse while at a Church event.

Although the Church is concerned when any form of child abuse takes place anywhere, the specific focus of these Guidelines is to make effort to ensure that abuse does not occur within the framework of this Church, its programs or ministry activities. These Guidelines are intended to help make the Church in all of its settings a truly safe and caring place.

II. Standards of Conduct –The Church endeavors to provide a safe environment for all children entrusted into its care during worship services, during involvement in any church ministry and any Church sponsored event and all encounters between children and church workers.

A. Prohibited Conduct: Conduct that is prohibited includes:

- Child abuse - any physical, mental, or emotional abuse of a child or children involving harm or the threat of harm to a child by an adult who is responsible for the child’s health and welfare*.
- Child neglect – any act of neglect that results in an unreasonable risk being posed to a child’s health or welfare by an adult who is responsible for the child’s health and welfare – also, the failure to act in a manner that would prevent or eliminate that risk by a responsible adult who has (or should have) knowledge of that risk*.
- Sexual abuse and exploitation - any behavior by an adult that uses a child for sexual stimulation, whether it involves actual touching or not, and regardless of consent or apparent consent*.

*Note: Each Province and State has laws specific to its jurisdiction regarding child abuse which define the terms in those laws. The definitions above are general only – not Province/State specific. Be aware that some jurisdictions limit the definition of child abuse to actions of abuse or neglect to only those adults who have legal guardianship over the abused minor. In these Provinces/States, abuse of children by others will be governed by other criminal statutes. Please seek the appropriate legal guidance for laws in your jurisdiction.

B. Desired Conduct: As a preventative measure, all church workers are required to follow the procedures adopted by the Church. The following best practices are suggested:

1. **Two-Adult Rule:** In ministry with minors, especially involving infants and pre-school aged children, there should always be a minimum of two adults in the immediate area. Groups larger than 10 young children should have additional supervision, depending upon

the age of the children and the activity. However, for children who are older, but still under the age of 18, the following exceptions are acceptable:

- a. **Exceptions:** Sunday School classes for kindergarten through high school students may have the presence of only one approved teacher if the following measures have been taken:
 - i. The door is left open or there is a window in the door that allows unobstructed visibility into the classroom; and/or
 - ii. The classrooms are periodically monitored by another approved adult worker; and/or
 - iii. One approved adult teacher may lead elementary, middle school, and high school Sunday School/ Bible classes if two or more teenage students are present.
 - iv. Under no circumstances will it ever be acceptable for a teen helper to be alone with a class of children.

2. **One-on-One Meetings:** The nature of much ministry, especially youth ministry, is that it often takes place spontaneously. Nonetheless, to the extent possible, one-on-one meetings between an adult church worker and an individual minor should be conducted in an area that provides visibility to other adults and be conducted at a time when other adults are normally present in that vicinity.

III. Preventative Measures and Hiring/Volunteering Requirements

A. **Initial Requirements:** All those who wish to work with minors in any capacity in the Church must meet the following requirements:

- Complete an application (See sample attached as *Appendix F*) and interview (See sample questions and form attached as *Appendix G*);
- Obtain a favorable criminal background check;
- Participate in required child protection training (see Section IIIB);
- Be knowledgeable about these Guidelines; and.
- Attend church consistently for a minimum of 6 months prior.

Note: It is the policy of the Church that anyone convicted of child neglect or abuse (physical or sexual) or any sex-based crime MAY NOT serve in any position involving the children/youth in the Church.

B. **Criminal Background Check:** A criminal background check must be completed and a favorable report received **prior to** any individual beginning work/ministry in any capacity with minors in the Church. This check shall include a City, Provincial/State

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and National criminal background check. It is the policy of the Church not to accept the record of a background check obtained from any other source nor any report that is more than 2 years old.

Background checks are generally requested by and processed through the employer or charitable organization. Some jurisdictions provide each requesting employer/volunteer with an ID number. Background results are sent to the employer. If an employer uses an outside agency to obtain the checks, the results are sent to that agency. It is advisable to use the services of an outside agency that is experienced to ensure the necessary authorizations, identification verification, and report review are accomplished] [The General Church will provide all Districts with information on outside agencies which have agreed to provide this service to Wesleyan local churches and affiliates at a group rate.] See *Appendix A* for a sample authorization. This can be easily expanded for dual purposes as the requisite application for ministry.

NOTE: It is advised that in addition to those who work with any children's ministry, all local church leadership and all employees of a local church or entity be screened and participate in training.

C. Mandatory Training - All workers with children, paid or volunteer, all local church employees and leadership are required to complete the requisite training components which are designed to instruct the participants of the:

- Church's guidelines for the prevention of child abuse.
- The Church's established procedures to be used in all ministries with children.
- Signs and indicators of possible child abuse.
- Required steps to report an alleged or actual incident of child abuse.
- Provincial/State law regarding child abuse specific to where entity is located. [Insert a summary of the appropriate jurisdiction's laws here. See sample in *Appendix B.*]

At the completion of the training, the participants will be asked to sign a Covenant (See *Appendix C*) signifying that they have completed the required training, are knowledgeable about the Church's policies and procedures that must be followed for the prevention of child abuse, and understand when and how to report on suspected child abuse.

Workers who do not participate in required training should be contacted regarding how and when an alternate training session will be offered. [The alternate training should include all those topics as listed above.] The Church must be sure to keep good records of documents that indicate each worker/minister/volunteer has been informed of the Church's policies and procedures, obtained favorable background check report, and participated in the required training.

D. Ongoing Requirements for All Who Work with Children:

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- Participate in all required training sessions on child protection;
- Be aware & vigilant when working with children;
- Keep lines of communication open with children and peers;
- Report ALL suspected child abuse immediately pursuant to these Guidelines;
- Follow up on any reporting by timely completing required reports; Cooperate with authorities and church leaders;
- Cooperate as required to obtain updated background re-checks every 2 years;
- Refrain from sharing information about the alleged matter with **all others** so as to protect the identity and reputations of the alleged victim and alleged abuser. Gossip not only hurts the alleged abuser and alleged victim but negatively impacts their families and the church community as a whole. Reporting is critical; Gossip is unnecessary.

E. Ongoing Responsibilities of Church Leadership:

- Ensure all who work with children in the Church have obtained favorable background check;
- Ensure all who work with children in the Church have received child protection training required by the Church;
- Ensure all who work with children in the church are knowledgeable about the church’s Guidelines;
- Conduct periodic review of these Guidelines & update as needed;
- Require periodic update background re-checks. Every 2 -3 years is advised.
- Reporting incidents that may lead to claims to Church’s insurer.
- Ensure all background check reports are maintained in a secure, locked manner and are only accessible by those on a need-to-know basis.

IV. Procedures for Reporting Child Abuse: [THESE PROCEDURES VARY BY JURISDICTION. YOU MUST FOLLOW THE PROCEDURES REQUIRED IN YOUR JURISDICTION.]

1. What Must Be Reported? In general, a suspicion of or secondary report by another of inappropriate, abusive or neglectful conduct of a child by a fellow worker or by any outside individual, should be immediately reported. Consult local laws.

2. Report to Whom? Report internally to _____ (*Insert name of supervisor for reporting purposes, hereinafter “Supervisor”*) **and** the local civil authority, usually police or child welfare agency, per local laws. If Supervisor is unavailable or the allegation involves the Supervisor or Supervisor’s family member, the allegation or suspicion should be reported to _____ (*Insert name of alternate supervisor*). It is the responsibility of the Supervisor to handle the matter in a manner consistent with these Guidelines and all applicable laws. In most circumstances and jurisdictions, **it is the reporter’s duty, not the Supervisor’s duty, to make the report to the civil authority.**

3. Who Must/Should Report? Under some provincial/state laws, certain individuals have a legal duty to report suspected abuse or neglect of a minor. These individuals, often referred to as Mandatory Reporters, may include medical professionals, educators, and human services workers. Some provinces/states include clergy in this list. A few provinces/states now require any adult suspecting child abuse to report. If you are a mandatory reporter in your jurisdiction, you should be aware of your reporting responsibilities and must follow those mandatory reporting requirements in your work as well as church ministry. Under the laws of many jurisdictions, a minister, clergyman, or priest of an established church of any denomination *may enjoy a statutory privilege of an exemption from* testifying on a disclosure made within spiritual counseling. However, in some jurisdictions this privilege is withheld if the disclosure concerns child abuse. Additionally, while the privilege attaches to testimony, it is not likely applicable to making a report. Consult your Provincial/State's laws for specifics.

All suspicions of Prohibited Conduct, as defined in Section IIA of these Guidelines, shall be reported consistent with local laws.

4. How to Report to the Supervisor? Notify Supervisor verbally, in person or by phone. This should be done in a place which allows both the reporter and the Supervisor to speak confidentially.

5. How to Report to the Appropriate Civil Authority? Call the number provided in Appendix E for the appropriate civil authority in your jurisdiction.

6. When to Report? Make your report immediately or as soon as possible after learning of an alleged incident or you develop a suspicion that abuse and/or neglect has occurred.

7. What Happens When a Report Is Made? After a report is received by the name agency or police, a reporter is usually also required in most jurisdictions to follow up with a written report within 24 – 48 hours. **Appendix D** is a suggested form for this report; however, some jurisdictions provide a specific form that must be used. The agency you contact will provide you with all details regarding when, where and how to submit the written report. An investigation into the allegation will be initiated by the appropriate civil authorities. Most jurisdictions allow the reporter to remain anonymous. Unless a person knowingly files a false report, the reporter is legally protected from a civil suit based on the report in most, if not all jurisdictions. Note that the civil authorities have no duty to share information garnered during their investigation with the reporter or the church or entity. Notwithstanding, it would be wise at the start of this process to learn the contact information for the person in charge of the investigation should further contact become necessary.

8. What Steps Will the Supervisor Take?

- a. Immediate Steps Upon Being Advised of suspicions of Prohibited Conduct as defined in Section IIA of these Guidelines: (not necessarily in this order)
- i. The Supervisor will follow all applicable local laws. Additionally, the Supervisor may consider the following:
 1. Ensuring the alleged child victim and all other children under the Church's responsibility are safe.
 2. Temporarily removing the alleged abuser from all contact with children via his/her ministerial positions, if applicable, while treating the alleged abuser respectfully knowing that the allegations remain under investigation. Note: Whenever any staff - paid or volunteer - is temporarily or permanently suspended it is advisable to do so in a formal writing. The writing can follow a conversation, if that is preferred but the Church's attorney should always be consulted before putting anything in writing in a potentially volatile and litigious situation.
 3. Communicating in an appropriate manner with the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the alleged victim to share information on the alleged incident and to ensure that any necessary medical attention is obtained for the alleged victim. If appropriate, the Supervisor may ask the church worker/reporter to accompany him/her to meet with the child's parent(s) or guardian(s).
 4. Verifying that the church worker (reporter) made the required initial report and written follow up report to the civil authorities pursuant to that Provincial/State's laws.
 5. Reporting the alleged incident to appropriate local church leaders, such as the local board of administration;
 6. Reporting the alleged incident to the District Superintendent;
 7. Reporting alleged incident to Church's attorney;
 8. Reporting the alleged incident to Church's insurance provider;
 9. Cooperating with civil authorities, attorney and insurer. *It is advisable to discuss all planned disclosures and written statements with the Church's attorney in advance of making any statements, issuing anything in writing or releasing church documents.*
 10. Keeping detailed and accurate records of all steps taken by the Church in response to the allegations. Clip and retain copies of all reports, correspondence and formal statements that are related to this matter together.
 11. Before taking any action beyond what is required by law, consult with the Church's attorney. There are often privacy, employment, health care, liability and other legal issues which may be unknowingly negatively impacted.

ii. Further follow-up:

1. Meet with the reporter of the incident and leaders of the affected ministry to discern next steps, if any, to begin the healing process of those leaders and youth members of that ministry;
2. Work with the Church's attorney to discern what is appropriate information to disclose and if, when, how and to what extent to address the whole church community to begin the healing process;
3. Discern the follow-up needs of alleged victim and alleged abuser and their families.

b. The following will guide the Supervisor's actions in response to the allegations:

- i. It is the Church's policy to treat the accused abuser with dignity and confidentiality to the extent possible as the allegations may be unfounded.
- ii. When child abuse occurs and even if allegations are later proven untrue, many others in addition to the alleged victim are often harmed. These may include: peers of the child, family members of the child, peers of the child's parents, other workers with children in the Church, the entire congregation and family members of the accused abuser. Though sensitive to this reality, **it is the Church's policy to first protect the child and all other children** and to cooperate with the authorities, and to promote healing of all who are adversely affected by abuse or allegations of abuse.
- iii. Church leaders and congregants should refrain from attempts to investigate the matter. Investigation is the job of the civil authorities trained for this purpose.
- iv. With the Church's attorney, Supervisor will designate ONE and ONLY ONE spokesperson to make all necessary statements or responses to the news media and/or the public.
- v. Supervisor, with assistance of legal counsel, will prepare a brief and honest statement that can be made to the congregation. Supervisor will not divulge any unnecessary details, place blame, interfere with the victim's privacy, or violate any confidentiality concerns.
- vi. Supervisor will cooperate as required by law with the investigation conducted by law enforcement officials or child welfare agency.
- vii. Supervisor will ensure a process to handle all documentation with the utmost confidentiality and safeguard all records kept pursuant to these Guidelines. Supervisor will ensure that documentation is retained in the Church's confidential files that record every step taken during this process.

**Appendix E* provides an optional form that can be used to provide the necessary contact information for use in the event child abuse or neglect allegations are made.

APPENDIX A

CRIMINAL RECORDS & REFERENCE CHECKS

Authorization & Release

_____ (*Church name*) requires a criminal records check as well as employer and personal reference checks for those who wish to work as a volunteer with children; serve in a leadership capacity, or as an employee in any capacity.

- I authorize the Church and its affiliates to perform a criminal background check on me.
- I authorize the release information from my current and former employer(s) as needed in response to reference checks by the Church.
- I understand and authorize the Church to release the results of my criminal background check and employment and personal reference checks to appropriate leadership on an as-needed basis.
- I understand and authorize the Church to conduct subsequent periodic criminal background re-checking so long as I continue to be involved with children/youth as a volunteer, leader or an employee, in any capacity.
- I understand that, by law, I have the right to review the results of my criminal records check and I have the right to contest those results with the appropriate civil authorities.
- I understand that the results of the criminal background check will be utilized for determining my eligibility to work with children, assume a leadership position or be employed by the Church.
- I understand that it is the Church's policy to disallow anyone with convictions for child abuse or abuse or sexual crimes with any others, to work with or near children or youth.
- I hereby affirm that I have never been convicted of child abuse or abuse or sexual offenses towards anyone.
- I hereby affirm that I have never been accused of being sexually, physically or emotionally abusive of a child.

By my signature below, I for myself, my heirs, executors and administrators, do forever release and discharge and agree to indemnify _____ (*Church's name*) and its officers, employees and agents to be harmless from and against any and all causes of actions, suits, liabilities, costs, demands and claims and related expenses including attorneys' fees and court costs and any other expenses resulting from the investigation into my background in connection with my application to take or continue in a position as an employee, volunteer or leader.

Print Name: _____ Date: _____

Sign Name: _____

Signed in the presence of: _____ (Witness signature)

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CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK – Applicant Information

The information below is needed to conduct this records check. Responses to the demographic questions are for background check purposes only and will have no bearing on hiring decisions.

Full Name: _____
 Last First Middle Maiden

Gender: Male _____ Female _____

Race: White _____ Black _____ American Indian _____ Asian/Pac.Islander _____ Hispanic _____ Bi-racial/Other _____

Date of Birth: _____ / _____ / _____
 Year Month Day

Social Insurance Number: _____

Current Address: _____

Previous Addresses: _____

List Other Names Previously Used By You:

Have you ever been convicted of a crime? Yes _____ No _____

Do you have any legal charges pending against you? Yes _____ No _____

If yes in either case, offer explanations regarding convictions or charges pending:

I affirm that the information I have provided above is true and complete.

Signature of Applicant: _____

Date: _____

[If you engage an outside agency to conduct background checks, it will likely require use of its own forms.]

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APPENDIX B

STATE OF MARYLAND [Sample Only]
(Substitute with the law of your jurisdiction, as appropriate)
Requirements for Reporting Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

CODE OF MARYLAND REGULATIONS, Section 07.02.07 requires reporting child abuse or neglect in the following manner:

1. An individual shall immediately report suspected child abuse or neglect to the local department of social services, or report the suspected incident to a local law enforcement agency.
2. Health practitioners, educators, human service workers, and police officers are required to report, both orally and in writing, any suspected child abuse or neglect, with oral report being made immediately and the written report being made within 48 hours of the contact which disclosed the suspected abuse or neglect.
3. A report shall include:
 - a. The name and home address of the child and the parent or other individual responsible for the care of the child;
 - b. The present location of the child;
 - c. The age of the child;
 - d. The names and ages of other children in the home;
 - e. The nature and extent of injuries or sexual abuse or neglect of the child, including any information known to the individual making the report of previous possible physical or sexual abuse or neglect;
 - f. The information available to the individual reporting:
 - i. Which might aid in establishing the cause of the injury or neglect;
 - ii. About the identity of the individual or individuals responsible for abuse or neglect; and
 - g. If reporting abuse or neglect of a child involving mental injury, a description of the substantial impairment of the child's mental or psychological ability to function that was observed and identified, and why it is believed to be attributable to an act of maltreatment or omission of proper care and attention.
4. Reports of abuse shall be made to the local departments of social services or the appropriate law enforcement agency. Reports of neglect shall be made to local departments of social services.
5. An employee of a local department of social services, who receives a report of suspected child abuse or neglect, shall report the information to the protective services unit within the local department at once so as to initiate prompt handling of the report of suspected child abuse or neglect.

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APPENDIX C

COVENANT

By my signature below, I acknowledge each of the following to be true:

- I have received a copy of _____ Church's Guidelines for Child Protection.
- I have read and understand the contents of these Guidelines.
- I have participated or will participate in training regarding these Guidelines.
- I understand that it is the Church's policy that if I have a reportable suspicion of child abuse, according to the laws of this Province/State, I should immediately do the following:
 - Inform Supervisor of my suspicion; AND
 - Report the suspected abuse to the appropriate civil authority; AND
 - Follow up with a written report to the civil authorities within 24 – 48 hours of the verbal report, as and if required by law; AND
 - Cooperate with Civil Authority investigating this matter; AND
 - Cooperate fully with the Supervisor, as requested.

I agree to comply with the procedures set forth in _____
(Church's Guidelines for Child Protection.)

Signature

Date

Printed Name

[This should be collected by Named Supervisor & kept with background check reports.]

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APPENDIX D

REPORT OF SUSPECTED INCIDENT OF CHILD ABUSE

1. Printed Name of worker (paid or volunteer) completing this form who observed or received disclosure of child abuse (whose signature is below): _____

2. Victim's name _____

Victim's age and date of birth _____

Victim's home address _____

Victim's present location _____

Home address of parent or other individual responsible for the care of the victim _____

Names and ages of other children in the home _____

3. Nature and extent of injuries or sexual abuse _____

4. Any information known of previous possible physical or sexual abuse _____

5. Date/place of initial conversation with/report from victim _____

6. Victim's statement (give your detailed summary here) _____

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7. Name of person accused of abuse _____

Relationship of accused to victim (paid staff, volunteer, family member, other) _____

8. Date reported to Named Supervisor _____

Signature of Person Making Report

Date

[Substitute with form required in your entity's jurisdiction, as appropriate.]

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE NAMED SUPERVISOR

9. Call/Visit victim's parent/guardian

Name(s) of alleged victims parent(s)/guardian(s): _____

Phone: (Home) _____ (Office) _____ (Cell) _____

Date/time of initial contact _____

Spoke with _____

Summary _____

10. Call to Child Protective Services and/or Police:

Date/time _____

Spoke with _____

Summary _____

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11. Call to Attorney's Office:

Date/time _____

Spoke with _____

Summary _____

12. Call to Insurance Agent (if applicable):

Date/time _____

Spoke with _____

Summary _____

**Other Contacts _____

Name(s) _____

Date/time _____

Summary _____

APPENDIX E

Supervisor:
(Named as internal contact)

Civil Authority to Report to:

District Office Contact Info:

District Superintendent
(phone)

General Church Office Contact Info:

Janelle Vernon
Executive Director of Communications and
Administration
(317-774-7907)

Canadian National Church Contact Info:

Stephen Elliott
National Superintendent
506- 435-0767

Church's Attorney:

Church's Insurance Agent:

Date last updated: _____

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APPENDIX F

SAMPLE APPLICATION

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Church Letterhead

Application for Youth and Children's Ministry Workers

Date: _____

General Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Best Time to Reach You: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Driver's License Number: _____ Prov. _____

Are you a member of the Church? yes no How long have you been attending services? _____

Church program(s) you have participated in: _____

What ministries have you served in? _____

Degree(s) and/or certification(s) you have related to children: _____

_____ CPR or First Aid certified: _____

List experience(s) working with children: _____

Why are you interested in working with children?

Which particular program would you like to work with? _____

References: Please provide two (2) references for individuals you have known for at least one (1) year. Reference forms are attached. Please detach and give to those persons you ask for a reference. It is your responsibility to remind these individuals to return the completed form directly to the church.

Interview: You will be contacted upon completion of your background check to schedule an interview.

Background Check: Every children's worker is required to obtain a criminal background check prior to any involvement in children's ministry. See attached sheet for instructions on how to obtain this.

Church letterhead

REFERENCE FORM

The following individual has applied to _____ (*Church name*) to work in one of our children's programs. Our application process requires each applicant to supply 2 references. The applicant asks that you complete this Reference Form and return it to the Church within 7 days. Thanks!

Applicant's Name: _____	Date: _____
Your Name: _____	
Address: _____	
Phone Number: _____	Email: _____
How long have you known the applicant?: _____	
Please describe the nature of your relationship with applicant: _____	

Applicant's strengths: _____	
Applicant's needs for growth: _____	
Do you have any reservations about the applicant working with children? Yes No	
Please explain: _____	

Signature: _____	
Date: _____	
<i>Note: You may be contacted directly by a Church leader as a follow up to your reference.</i>	

Please return this completed form directly to: *Church's name, address, attention of:*

APPENDIX G

SAMPLE SCREENING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

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Youth & Children's Ministry Worker

THE INTERVIEW

General Suggestions:

- ✓ Interview should take about 20 - 30 minutes.
- ✓ Form your questions to be open-ended to elicit more than a simple yes or no.
- ✓ Use a one page interview form which contains the name of the applicant, name & title of interviewer, date, time and place of the interview. [*Sample form follows.*]
- ✓ Take brief notes of the interview, especially anything that bears notice.
- ✓ The interviewer should sign the interview sheet and state on the form whether or not the interview raised any concerns about the applicant that indicates follow up is needed or that the applicant should be disallowed from any ministry with minors.

Sample Questions: (*Choose 4 – 6 applicable questions or edit to meet your needs.*)

- Tell me about your experiences working with children or youth.
- What skills or strengths would you bring into your youth ministry work?
- What attracted you to this Church? What do you like best about this Church?
- Tell me about your best memories as a child participating in a church youth program?
- What are your hobbies? What do you do when you have free time?
- What age children are you most comfortable with? Why?
- Why are you interested in doing children's ministry here?
- How would you handle the following situation(s):
 - A child age 3 takes a toy that another similarly aged child was peacefully playing with?
 - A child age 8 takes a toy that a younger child was playing with?
 - A child age 10 hits another child for no apparent reason?
 - A 14 year old who is usually gregarious is sullen and withdrawn?
 - On an outing, a 9 year old acts out several times inappropriately?
 - A parent demands that another child be banned from the nursery for hitting her child?
 - A co-worker is constantly texting rather than being attentive to the children?
- What are your personal and professional goals?
- How do you evaluate your success as a youth ministry worker?
- What do you consider to be the ideal environment for elementary age ministry? Youth ministry?
- Share one personal or spiritual growth area that you have been working on.
- What qualities do you look for in a children's ministry leader?
- Where do you get ideas for your work in children's ministry?
- Describe a successful lesson or concept that you have taught to youth?
- What do you consider to be the 3 most important characteristics in a youth ministry worker?
- Who is one of your role models? What do you find admirable about this person?
- Name 2 things that you do to grow in faith.

(Church's name or letterhead here)

Youth & Children's Ministry Worker

INTERVIEW NOTES

Date of Interview: _____ Time/Length of Interview: _____

Applicant Name: _____

Children's ministry position/age applicant is most interested in: _____

Interviewer's Comments:

Interviewer's knowledge of applicant (circle one):

Well acquainted Passing acquaintance Just met today

- Positive Characteristics:

- Areas of Need:

- Concerns:

Based solely on this interview, would you recommend this applicant for children's or youth ministry work? Yes No For what age level or program? _____

Signature of Interviewer

Interviewer's Printed Name

[This should be kept in secure location with applicant's application & background check record.]