

**Safeguarding Our Children and Youth: Policy on Physical, Sexual and Emotional Misconduct**

Session adopted the current policy, a supplement to the Presbytery of New Hope's policy, in an effort to prevent abuse and false accusations of abuse.

**GUIDELINES:**

**Two Adult Rule -**

- Two adults should be present at all times when involved in a program with children and youth.

**Age requirements -**

- One caregiver should be 21 years or older if children are 2 years old and the group size is less than 10.
- One caregiver should be 18 years old or older if the children are over 2 years old and the groups size is less than 10.
- A youth 12 years old or older may be counted as an adult if another caregiver meets the above requirements.

**Physical Environment –**

- Physical surroundings and group size should allow adequate space and visibility for monitoring the group. Visual access must be provided.

**Volunteer Covenant Statement and Background Checks –**

- Criminal background checks are performed on all paid nursery staff and all youth advisors.
- If the statement cannot be signed or the background check reveals negative findings, these facts will be referred to the appropriate staff and team for action.

**Church Membership**

- All teachers, nursery volunteers and youth advisors must be church members for at least 6 months. All others must be especially approved by Session.

**Parents and Guardians Welcome**

- Parents and guardians of children and youth are welcome to visit, participate in or chaperone programs in which their child is participating.

*Sections not pertaining to Sunday School and "Procedures for Reporting and Handling Violations" have been omitted from this summary. The full document is available in the church office.*