

**Child
Sexual Abuse
Prevention Guidelines
For The Church**

The Lighthouse Church

Orwigsburg, PA

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Guideline Overview	4
Definitions and Indicators	
Definitions of Child Sexual Abuse	7
Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect.....	8
Possible Indicators of Child Sexual Abuse.....	9
Description of the Selection Process for Workers with Children and Youth	10
Age Group/Activity Guidelines	
Nursery Guidelines	11
Preschool & Kindergarten Class Guidelines.....	12
First through Sixth Grade Class Guidelines.....	13
Junior and Senior High Class Guidelines	14
Youth Ministry/Worker Guidelines	15
Overnight Activities.....	16
Church Drivers.....	16
Response Plan	
Activities That May Lead to Allegations.....	17
Response Plan: Steps to Take if Child Sexual Abuse is Suspected.....	17
Intervention Plan.....	19
Acknowledgments	21
Forms	22

Introduction

Child sexual abuse is a subject not many want to talk about, dwell on, or believe can happen to them or their church. However, child sexual abuse does occur and is happening in ever increasing numbers in homes and churches across the United States. Statistics show that one in every four girls and one in every six boys will be sexually abused before they reach the age of eighteen.

Because of the seriousness of this subject, The Lighthouse Church (TLHC) desires to make its places of ministry safe for all children, youth and church workers. By being proactive and taking precautionary measures that screen and train workers with children and youth, and providing guidelines and procedures that offer assistance to parents and church workers, TLHC can hopefully prevent such atrocities from ever occurring in our church community.

We encourage everyone in the church to be informed about child sexual abuse. Therefore, everyone who participates in an Inquiry and Orientation Class will receive an overview of these guidelines. If these participants feel they could volunteer in the future to work with kids at TLHC, they will be given the opportunity to fill out an Occasional Child/Youth Worker Application Form as a way of making members and attendees of TLHC safely available for service to our children and youth on an occasional basis (e.g. helping in a Class as an Aide).

Anyone who is going to be a worker with our children or youth over an extended period of time will be required to fill out an Ongoing Child/Youth Worker Application Form, consent to a background check and references being contacted, as well as participate in a training session about our child sexual abuse prevention guidelines.

Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Guideline Overview

- I. Recruiting, Selecting, and Training Volunteers and Paid Staff
 - A. Minimum Qualifications: Every person (paid and unpaid) who works with children and/or youth will:
 1. Confess Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior and adhere to the affirmations of faith of the church
 2. Be a member in good standing or a regular attendee for at least six months.
 3. Have no history of being an abuser.
 - B. Procedures:
 1. Ongoing and Occasional Youth Workers must complete a confidential application form, which will be maintained in a confidential file and include:
 - a. Personal information: Name, address, etc.
 - b. Ministry information: Areas of interest, gifts, talents, etc.
 - c. Guidelines concerning the care for working with children and/or youth.
 - d. A place for signature to state that applicant has read the procedures and agrees to observe the safeguards.
 - e. Church history and youth work information: a five-year church, volunteer and ministry history for staff and volunteers, leaders and supervisors.
 2. Ongoing Child/Youth Workers must agree to a confidential background check of public records and as well as an interview.
 - C. Education: Ongoing Child/Youth Workers will be required to receive education on the child sexual abuse prevention guidelines of TLHC.
- II. Procedures
 - A. Avoid Isolation:
 1. Volunteers and staff are to observe the two-Worker rule. This requires that Workers should not be in an isolated setting with a child or youth without another Worker.
 2. Events: When away from the church on an outing or at a church “overnight”, volunteers and staff are to work together as a team and not be isolated with a child or adolescent.
 3. If it is necessary for a volunteer or staff member to meet individually with a child or youth, it should be done so in a public setting, or where they are clearly visible by others.
 4. Staff member should not spend time alone with a child or adolescent without the awareness and written consent of that individual’s parent/guardian.

B. Release Guidelines: Creating and following guidelines for releasing children after classes reduce the opportunities for both abuse and abduction. **Two** Workers should remain with all children when dropped off until they are picked up.

1. Nursery: No child will be released from the nursery except into the care of the person who signed them in, unless noted at the time the child is signed in that another (named) person will be picking the child up and must have the call number.
2. Children (Preschool through 6th Grade)
 1. At the beginning of the class year, and first time users, each parent/guardian should sign a Parental Consent and Release Form, designating who should be allowed to pick up their children. All people designated must be age 18 and over or a sibling age 12 and over (with the understanding that they must return promptly to their parents).
 2. Parents/Guardians or other appointees, should promptly pick up their children after class is over.
 3. Junior and Senior High Classes: These youth may be released after the class is over. If the parents wish the students to remain in the classroom until picked up by parent/guardian, that should be made known to the Youth Workers.

C. Reporting Procedures

1. Reporting Obligations: Volunteers and staff are to immediately report any behavior which seems abusive or inappropriate, or any incident reported by a child or adolescent.
2. Line of Reporting
 1. Workers shall report alleged abuse to the Overseeing Leader (Doreen Smith or Pastor Mark Hochgertel) of the activity, Senior Pastor, or deacon as is appropriate.
 2. The pastoral staff shall report the abuse directly to ChildLine and/or the police department or witness the Worker making the report. The reporter may remain anonymous to the outside authorities, the victim and alleged perpetrator if they wish.

D. Response Plan

1. When an allegation of abuse by a church Worker is brought to the attention of pastoral staff, a Crisis Task Force will be convened. This Task Force will meet with the victim and family.
2. The Task Force will meet with the volunteer who is the alleged abuser to discuss the allegation and inform them that they may not participate in children's or youth ministry until the investigation into the allegation is complete.
3. The Task Force will document all of its activities.
4. The pastoral staff will also make note of the allegation and its outcome on the volunteer's confidential application form.

III. Training and Education

- A. Once each year all volunteers and staff who work with children will attend training to educate them on the guidelines and procedures for reducing the risk of abuse.
- B. Appropriate church staff members will review together the guidelines and procedures for reducing the risk of abuse on an annual basis.
- C. All church staff will have a copy of these policies in print or electronic form.

Copies of the guidelines, in short brochure form as well as full guidelines, will be available for any church attendee through the church office.

Definitions of Child Sexual Abuse

The precise legal definition of child sexual abuse or molestation varies from state to state, but in general includes any form of sexual conduct or exploitation in which a minor is being used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator. In a more common sense, child sexual abuse is:

“Any sexual activity with a child—whether in the home by a caretaker, in a day care situation, in a church, a foster/residential setting, or in any other setting, including on the street by a person unknown to the child. The abuser may be an adult, an adolescent or an other child, provided the child is four years older than the victim.” (National Resource Center on Sexual Abuse; 1992).

Child sexual abuse may be violent or non-violent. All child sexual abuse is an exploitation of a child’s vulnerability and powerlessness in which the abuser is fully responsible for their actions.

Child sexual abuse is a criminal behavior that involves children in sexual behaviors for which they are not personally, socially, and developmentally ready.

Child sexual abuse includes behaviors that involve touching and non-touching aspects.

Types of sexual abuse that involve touching include:

- Fondling
- Oral, genital, and anal penetration
- Intercourse
- Forcible rape

Types of sexual abuse that do not involve touching include:

- Verbal comments
- Pornographic videos or pictures
- Obscene phone calls
- Exhibitionism
- Allowing children to witness sexual activity

Child sexual abuse occurs in all demographic, racial, ethnic, socio-economic, and religious groups. Strangers account for less than 20 percent of the abusers. Estimates indicate that when a known assailant commits the abuse, half of the time it is a father or stepfather, and the rest of the time it is a trusted adult who misuses his or her authority over children.

Definitions of Child Abuse and Neglect

Pennsylvania's Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) defines as follows five types of abuse, all of which must result from an act or failure to act by a perpetrator:

1. **Non-accidental Serious Physical Injury:** A recent* injury that causes the child severe pain or significantly impairs the child's physical functioning, either temporarily or permanently.
2. **Serious Physical Neglect:** Prolonged or repeated lack of supervision or the failure to provide the essentials of life, including adequate medical care, which results in the child sustaining a condition that endangers the child's life or development or impairs the child's functioning.
3. **Sexual Abuse or Exploitation:** Rape, sexual assault, statutory sexual assault, involuntary deviate sexual intercourse, indecent assault, aggravated indecent assault, molestation, incest, indecent exposure, promoting prostitution, pornography, or other form of sexual exploitation of children.
4. **Serious Mental Injury:** A psychological condition, as diagnosed by a physician or licensed psychologist, that renders the child chronically and severely anxious, agitated, depressed, socially withdrawn, psychotic or in reasonable fear that his or her life or safety is threatened, or seriously interferes with the child's ability to accomplish age-appropriate developmental and social tasks.
5. **Imminent Risk:** A recent* act or failure to act that creates an imminent risk of serious physical injury or sexual abuse/exploitation of the child that occurs during an incident or series of incidents.

*Within two years of the date of the report.

Possible Indicators of Child Sexual Abuse

Most cases of child sexual abuse go undetected. There may be no apparent physical signs, or there may be physical signs that are detected only through a medical examination. However, there are some signals that a worker may observe that will indicate whether sexual abuse is occurring.

High indicators of abuse which may warrant a report are:

1. A child reports being abused.
2. A child has unusual and repeated bruises, welts, or burns. A child gives varied or different reasons for the same injury.
3. A child has explicit sexual knowledge above age expectations. This includes extensive knowledge of sexual acts, slang/technical terms and/or demonstrated sexual behavior in conversation or play.

The following should raise your concern for the possibility of abuse and could suggest the need to explore further. **The presence of several of these could warrant your making a report.**

Child's Appearance	Child's Behavior	Caretaker's Behavior
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in walking or sitting • Torn, stained, or bloody underclothing • Pain, bleeding or swollen genitalia • Semen around mouth, genitalia or on clothing • Venereal disease, especially in preteens. • Pregnancy • Lacerations around mouth • Warts around genital area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suddenly withdrawn; engages in fantasy or infantile behavior • Poor peer relationships • Unwilling to participate in physical activities • Engages in delinquent acts or runs away • States he/she has been sexually assaulted by parent/caregiver • Fear of rest rooms or being left alone • Unusual sexual knowledge • Does not want to go home from church • Becomes self-abusive: pulling hair out, banging head, cutting themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extremely protective or jealous of child • Experiencing marital difficulties • Misuses alcohol/drugs • Frequently absent from home • Experienced sexual abuse as a child

Description of the Selection Process for Workers with Children and Youth -- Paid and Unpaid

Because we care deeply for the children and youth of TLHC, we take steps to protect their physical and emotional safety.

Any persons who are known to have committed previous acts of sexual misconduct, or where serious allegations have been made, will be strictly prohibited from serving with youth.

Description of Screening Procedure

1. To be an Ongoing Child/Youth Worker you must be a member in good standing and to attend TLHC regularly for a minimum of six months. Occasional Child/Youth Workers need to attend regularly for a minimum of six months. In the case of guest ministries and new staff hires, exceptions might be made (with due diligence to background screening and references from previous churches).
2. All Workers who are serving our children and youth over an extended period of time are required to fill out an Ongoing Child/Youth Worker Application Form which is kept in complete confidence. If you are serving occasionally, you will be asked to fill out an Occasional Child/Youth Worker Application Form.
3. All references will be checked and a written record of results will be maintained confidentially with application.
4. Confidential, personal interviews of all Ongoing Child/Youth Workers will be conducted and documented. We also reserve the right to interview anyone who will be even in occasional contact with children and youth.
5. Ongoing Child/Youth Workers will be required to attend a training session(s) to equip them to carry out these guidelines. Occasional Child/Youth Workers will be encouraged to attend these training sessions as well.

Nursery Guidelines

1. There should be at least **two** Workers in the room during and after each church event until the last child is picked up. One of these Workers should be an Ongoing Child/Youth Worker (Staff), and should be visibly identified as the Ongoing Child Youth Worker (Staff).
2. No one other than nursery Workers (Ongoing Child/Youth Workers (Staff) and helpers), parent(s) or guardian(s) and their babies should be allowed in the nursery area during church events.
3. Workers should not accept any child whose parent or guardian will not remain within the physical confines of the church. This is to ensure the Workers can immediately contact the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) in the event of an emergency.
4. Diaper changes must be done by a parent or guardian. Changing stations are available in the nursery and ladies room.
5. Workers should have first time users of child services complete a Parental Consent and Release Form, which among other things will identify the people, age 18 and over, who are authorized to pick up their child(ren).

Preschool & Kindergarten Class Guidelines

1. There should be at least **two** Workers in the room before, during and after each church event until the last child is picked up. One of these Workers should be an Ongoing Child/Youth Worker (Teacher).
2. No one other than child Workers (Ongoing Child/Youth Teacher and helpers), parent(s) or guardian(s) should be allowed in the classrooms (unless previously agreed to, e.g. guest speakers or extra/alternate helpers).
3. Bathroom Guidelines
 - a. Preschool Bathroom Procedures
 - i. Parents should be asked to take their children to the bathroom before class so that the child won't have to leave the room.
 - ii. The preschool will use the same number system as the nursery. Each child will have a designated number for the year and that number is posted outside of the classroom for parents to see and inside for the workers. When a child needs to use the restroom or a parent needs to be called to the classroom a teacher's assistant will go to the front of the nursery and have the nursery staff put the number up on the display then return to class.
 - b. Kindergarten Bathroom Procedures
 - i. Parents should be asked to take their children to the bathroom before class so that the child won't have to leave the supervised room.
 - ii. Children should be taken to the bathroom only upon their request or if the child shows obvious signs of needing to go. The Worker should give privacy to the toileting child commensurate to their age.
 - iii. If the child requests a Worker's help in the bathroom, try to teach the child how to help themselves as much as possible. Use the hand-over-hand method. This technique enables you to place your hands over the child's hands in helping with fastening clothes, wiping skin, and the like. Spend as little time in the bathroom as possible.
 - iv. If the restroom is unoccupied when you enter, prop the restroom door open and wait at the open door unless help is needed.
 - v. Both the Worker and the child should wash their hands after toileting.
4. When a child is being escorted to the bathroom, the classroom will be supervised by a Worker (at the discretion of the Ongoing Child/Youth Worker) so the other children can be attended to.
5. Workers should not accept any child whose parent or guardian will not remain within the physical confines of the church unless the parent or guardian leaves emergency contact information (phone number, location, etc). This is to ensure the Workers can immediately contact the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) in the event of an emergency.

6. In case of discipline problems, no spanking or swearing may be used. When behavior is not acceptable, an **in-room** time-out period should be used (one minute per age of the child is acceptable, unless otherwise directed by the parents) with the exception of special needs children. If behavioral problem persists, worker/aide should get the child's parent/guardian.
7. Workers should have first time users of child services complete a Parental Consent and Release Form which, among other things, will identify the people, age 18 and over or siblings ages 12 and older (with the understanding that they must return promptly to their parents), who are authorized to pick up their child(ren).

8. First Grade through Sixth Grade Class Guidelines

1. Two Workers should be in the classroom before, during, and after each class period until the last child is picked up. One of these Workers should be an Ongoing Child/Youth Worker.
2. No one other than child Workers (Ongoing Child/Youth and Aides), parent(s) or guardian(s) should be allowed in the classrooms (unless previously agreed to, e.g. guest speakers or extra/alternate helpers).
3. Workers should not accept any child whose parent or guardian will not remain within the physical confines of the church unless the parent or guardian leaves emergency contact information (phone number, location, etc). This is to ensure the Workers can immediately contact the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) in the event of an emergency.
4. Bathroom Guidelines:
 - a. Parents should be asked to take their children to the bathroom before class so that the child won't have to leave the supervised room.
 - b. Children should be taken to the bathroom only upon their request or if the child shows obvious signs of needing to go. Workers should give privacy to the toileting child.
 - c. It is assumed in this age group that the child will not need help toileting. If they do, this should be discussed with the child Workers in advance.
 - d. If the restroom is unoccupied when you enter, prop the restroom door open and wait at the open door.
 - e. The child should wash their hands after toileting.
5. In case of discipline problems, no spanking or swearing may be used. When behavior is not acceptable, an in-room time-out period should be used. If behavioral problem persists, one Worker should get the child's parent/guardian.
6. Workers should have first time users of child services complete a Parental Consent and Release Form which, among other things, will identify the people, age 18 and over or siblings ages 12 and older (with the understanding that they must return promptly to their parents), who are authorized to pick up their child(ren).

Junior and Senior High Class Guidelines

1. Two Workers should be in the classroom before, during, and after each class period. One of these Workers should be an Ongoing Child/Youth Worker.
2. No one other than child Workers (Ongoing Child/Youth and Aides), parent(s) or guardian(s) should be allowed in the classrooms (unless previously agreed to, e.g. guest speakers or extra/alternate helpers).
3. Youth should remain in i61 room during class and not leave the room unless there is an emergency (e.g. feeling sick) or parent/guardian comes to pick up.
4. In case of discipline problems, no hitting or swearing may be used. When behavior is not acceptable, an in-room cooling off period should be used. If behavioral problem persists, one Worker should go get the youth's parent/guardian

Youth Ministry/Worker Guidelines

1. When possible, youth ministry/Workers should not transport a student alone. At least two adults or at least two students should be present.
2. At least two Workers (adult leaders) must be present at youth activities.
3. Youth leaders/Workers should not leave students alone at the church waiting for transportation. If only one student remains, two leaders should remain when possible.
4. A youth leader must not interact with a student in any sexual manner (e.g. physical, verbal, visual).
5. A youth leader/Worker must not engage in a romantic relationship with any youth.
6. Youth Workers/leaders should avoid one-on-one meetings in private places with youth (same or opposite sex). If this is unavoidable, Pastor Mark Hochgertel should be made aware when these meetings take place.
7. When a youth leader/Worker has a legitimate reason to be alone with a student, they must first:
 - a. Obtain the consent of the student's parent or guardian before going out alone with or spending time with the student in an unsupervised situation. (For students who come on a regular basis, this can be done yearly).
 - b. Notify Pastor Mark Hochgertel of such meetings in advance.
8. Any **non-scheduled** meetings (one-on-one, etc.) should have an adult chaperone of the same sex as the student participants.
9. Youth leaders/Workers should have parental permission for each student's involvement in overnight or out of town activities.
10. Youth leaders/Workers must clear in advance all adult chaperones with proper church leaders, before scheduling them for overnight activities that involve youth. These chaperones are required to fill out an Occasional Child/Youth Worker Application and if possible, have a background check before the activity.

Overnight Activities

1. Adult chaperones should have gone through the screening and background check process.
2. Workers are to work together as a team and not be isolated with an adolescent.
3. The Youth-to-Worker ratio should be no higher than 7 to 1.
4. Take care that small numbers of youth are not alone together for long periods of time.
5. Sleeping arrangements are to be separate by gender.
6. Youth should not be released from an overnight activity during the night unless there is notification of or permission by the parent/guardian.

Church Drivers

For the protection of our youth and our drivers, the following guidelines should be observed.

1. When possible, youth leaders/Workers should not transport a student alone. At least two adults or at least two students should be present.
2. If not already a Child/Youth Worker, then church drivers are required to fill out an Occasional Child/Youth Worker Application, as well as an Application for Church Drivers.
3. If inappropriate behavior is observed in the vehicle (e.g. sexual harassment, bullying, demeaning, or other discipline problems) the driver should reprimand the student(s) and report the behavior to the youth leader/Worker.

Activities That May Lead to Allegations

There are many situations that could lead to an allegation of child sexual abuse. Please take time to study the Definitions and Indicators of Child Sexual Abuse earlier in this packet. It is important to recognize that there are “gray areas” that may lead to allegations. Workers with children and youth may not realize when their actions could be interpreted as inappropriate (e.g. excessive tickling or hugging). Mutual supervision is important to this process. That is why each Worker or volunteer is encouraged to carefully, but clearly, bring this to the attention of the person who is acting inappropriately. If questionable behavior continues to occur, or if overt sexual abuse occurs you must report it to the Senior Pastor or Designee as detailed below. If this is implemented with care and sensitivity, actual instances of abuse or molestation can be avoided.

Response Plan: Steps to Take if Child Sexual Abuse is Suspected

The primary responsibility of someone reporting suspected sexual abuse is to ensure the safety of the child while attending TLHC or church sponsored activities. Discrete and confidential reporting of suspected sexual abuse is critical to abuse prevention. Please understand that reporting abuse reflects caring and is not an act of disloyalty. If you witness or hear about a sexually abusive situation and do not report it, the safety of our children may be compromised. Anyone may report child abuse. As long as the report is based on a good faith suspicion that abuse is occurring, the reporter will be immune from any civil and criminal proceedings that could result. Paid church Workers are considered legally mandated to report. Volunteers are encouraged to report, but would not be held legally responsible if they do not. When the person hearing the allegation or witnessing abuse tells the Pastor of the abuse, they (the paid church Worker) will be legally mandated to report this information if the witness does not. The paid church Worker must make this report immediately by phone and in writing within forty-eight hours. It is considered an obligation of our all of TLHC Workers (paid or unpaid) to follow these guidelines.

The following steps should be taken upon receiving allegations or observing sexual abuse:

Anyone who becomes aware of suspected sexual abuse by a church Worker or volunteer is to report it directly to the Senior Pastor, and communicate their intention to file a report. This is so the suspected perpetrator of abuse can be removed from their proximity to children at TLHC during their investigation.

The Senior Pastor will not in any way hinder the filing of the report. For the protection of all involved, it is strongly recommended that the notification to authorities be made in the presence of the Pastor. As mandated reporters, the paid church Worker can learn the final legal status of the report and what services have been or will be provided to the child and family as a result of the initial report. The unpaid church Worker would not be able to receive such information. The reporting party can still remain anonymous to the authorities.

If the Worker suspects abuse or hears an allegation of abuse *occurring in the home of one of the children or youth*, the Worker is encouraged to file a report as detailed below. In this case no one in the church need be notified, unless the alleged perpetrator is a child/youth Worker at

TLHC. It is all right to make a report on a reasonable suspicion. You do not need actual evidence to call. Give the information you have, and the authorities will determine if the suspicion warrants an investigation. You may call ChildLine just to ask if the information you have warrants a report.

The report is to be filed as soon as possible with **ChildLine 1-800-932-0313**. This toll-free number is staffed twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week by Pennsylvania's Department of Public Welfare. This is the number to call for child abuse in the state of Pennsylvania, regardless of the county the child lives. If the alleged perpetrator is not related to the victim, ChildLine will direct the reporting party to call the police department where the alleged crime took place.

Be prepared to answer as many of the following types of questions as possible:

*Why do you suspect abuse has occurred?

*Name of child.

*Address, phone, school – as much information as you have so that the child can be reached in the next 24 hours.

Who is alleged perpetrator of abuse?

How did you find out?

Who else knows about the abuse?

Parents names and address(es), any siblings in the home?

* Most important information. The rest is helpful but not necessary to make a report.

You can choose to remain anonymous when calling ChildLine or the Police. ChildLine will then do a perpetrator search to find out if they have previous information of this child being abused or the perpetrator being accused. Then ChildLine contacts the County Department of Children and Youth for the County that child lives, and the police if necessary.

If you choose to identify yourself, this gives a County Department of Children and Youth Investigator and/or Police the option to call you to clarify any information you give. They will keep your name and information confidential from the child, their family, and the alleged perpetrator. The Investigator is obligated to see the child within 24 hours of receiving the report.

Intervention Plan

If charges of child sexual abuse by a church Worker or volunteer are reported to the Pastor, the following actions will be taken:

The Pastor will call ChildLine and police if the youth Worker hasn't.

The Pastor will convene a Crisis Task Force consisting of the Pastor, available Deacons, and other appropriate individuals.

This Task Force will outline the necessary steps in response to the filed report. It will not attempt an in-depth investigation. That will be left to the appropriate government authorities.

It is recommended that this task force:

1. Document all efforts at handling the incident (e.g. who was contacted and when, using specific times and dates) while maintaining strict confidentiality.
2. Notify TLHC's liability insurance carrier.
3. Notify the parents or guardians, unless they are the alleged perpetrators.
4. Confront the accused after the safety of the child or youth member is secured.
5. Designate a specific spokesperson for the church if media become involved.
6. Discretely remove the alleged offender from their TLHC position(s) while the investigation is being conducted.

If the allegations become legally **unsubstantiated**:

1. The accused person will need to provide official evidence, if they can obtain this, that they were innocent. This information would be placed in the accused's file along with their application. Once the investigation is begun by civil authorities, the details and information is kept confidential from the public, including TLHC. In the majority of cases, the allegations become unsubstantiated from a legal standpoint. If this occurs, **but** the accuser remains steadfast in their allegation, the Worker will be prohibited from working with children at TLHC.
2. If the accuser recants the allegation, then every effort will be made to exonerate, reconcile and restore the accused person. Also, a public statement by the Crisis Task Force will be made if the accused person desires.
3. The Task Force will respond with concern, care and love for the complainant(s), for the congregation, and for the accused and their family.

4. The accused will be notified in writing that a copy of the filed report and investigation's findings will be retained for legal purposes by the church. The report will be confidential and only appropriate church staff will have access to the file.

If the allegations and investigations **substantiate** abuse:

1. The offender will be permanently removed from susceptible environments and offices in the TLHC ministry.
2. The victim(s) and their family/families will be given utmost consideration and pastoral care.
3. Continued pastoral care and counseling can be extended to the offender and family during rehabilitation.
4. The Deacons will weigh the risks and make a determination regarding church membership status of the offender.

Ministry and Support

To the victim who has been abused by a church Worker or volunteer:

1. A person from TLHC will serve as an advocate and a support to the victim(s) and their family/families.
2. Sensitivity, care and love will be extended to the victim(s) and their family/families.
3. A list of qualified counselors will be provided.
4. Our church will provide some financial assistance for counseling.
5. In case of multiple victims, opportunities will be offered for these persons to meet together for support, prayer, healing and encouragement.

To the accused and their family:

1. A person from TLHC will serve as an advocate and support to the accused and their family.
2. A list of qualified counselors will be provided.
3. TLHC could provide some financial assistance for counseling.
4. Sensitivity, care and love will be extended to the accused and their family.

Acknowledgments

These Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Guidelines for The Lighthouse Church were compiled by Lisa Pawlowski, a Licensed Social Worker & specialist in child abuse protection, and edited by Joshua Meade, an administrative assistant at The Lighthouse Church. They would like to acknowledge the following:

- Church Law and Tax Report provided a written curriculum with suggestions on how churches create such guidelines.
- Organizations giving input to specific questions we had were: Big Brothers/Big Sisters of the Lehigh Valley, Lehigh County Office of Children and Youth Services, ChildLine, and the Allentown Police – Sex Crimes Division.
- Project Child—The Child Abuse Prevention Coalition of the Lehigh Valley who compiled the “Child Abuse Primer for Pre-school and Elementary Educators”.
- Accufax for providing comprehensive child worker screening and background checks and related applications, forms and advice.
- Also we would like to thank the many people who specifically prayed for us through this process.

Although much prayer, research and thought has gone into the preparation of these guidelines, we expect that this document will change and evolve with time and experience. There will be an annual review of the effectiveness of these guidelines including assessment of how they impact our ability to minister.

The Lighthouse Church

Route 61 North, Orwigsburg, PA 17961
Ongoing Child/Youth Worker Application Form

This application is to be completed by all applicants for any position (volunteer or compensated) involving the ongoing supervision or custody of minors. This is not an employment application. It will be used to help the church provide a safe and secure environment for those children and youth who participate in our programs and use our facilities.

Personal Information:

Date: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Business Phone: _____ Email: _____

Ministry:

Please indicate the youth or children's ministry in which you desire to serve

Please indicate the date you would be available to begin _____

What is the minimum length of commitment you can make? __ 6 months __ 1 year __ _____

List any gifts, training, education, or interests which will help you in your ministry to children or youth _____

References: Please list all churches you have regularly attended in the last five years.

<u>Church</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	<u>Dates</u>

List all previous church **and** non-church work involving children and youth.

<u>Church or Agency</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Dates</u>

List 3 references who were able to observe your work with children (either church or non-church work):

<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	<u>Relationship to You</u>

Guidelines:

The following guidelines reflect our commitment to provide protective care to all children, youth, volunteers, and staff who participate in church-sponsored activities.

1. All adult volunteers and staff shall confess Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior, be a member in good standing and attendee of TLHC for at least six months.
2. Agree with TLHC's statement of faith & doctrine.
3. Adults who have perpetrated and/or been convicted of either sexual or physical abuse of a child or children will not be permitted to serve as volunteers in any church-sponsored activity or program for children or youth.
Have you ever **perpetrated** any of these crimes?
Yes____ No____
Have you ever been **accused of** or **been convicted** of any of these crimes?
Yes____ No____
4. Adult volunteers and staff are to observe the "two adult" rule. This requires that adults make every reasonable effort to avoid being in an isolated setting with children or youth without another youth/child Worker.
5. Volunteers or staff are to immediately report to the Pastor any behavior which seems abusive or inappropriate or any incident reported by a child or adolescent.
6. When an allegation of abuse is brought to the attention of the staff, it will be reported to outside authorities (ChildLine and/or the Police). The volunteer or staff member accused will be informed that he/she may not minister to children or adolescents at TLHC during the investigation.

Do you have any questions about these guidelines? Yes ____ No____

As a church volunteer, do you agree to observe all church guidelines regarding working with youth or children: Yes ____ No____

Do you have any personal history of abuse (sexual abuse or abuse of any kind) **that you feel would prevent you** from complying with these guidelines for working with children or reporting child abuse? Yes ____ No____

Are you willing to fill out a consent form for a criminal and child abuse background check?
Yes ____ No____

Are you willing to attend a training course(s) to become familiar with The Lighthouse Church's Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Guidelines? Yes ____ No____

For your interview process, do you have a preference of who would conduct the interview?
Yes: ____ A Male ____A Female or No preference ____

I certify that the information contained in this application is correct, complete, and accurate. I give my permission for any references checked to give The Lighthouse Church any information they may have regarding my suitability and fitness for children's or youth work. I have read the above guidelines and agree to observe the safeguards listed.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

The Lighthouse Church
Route 61 North, Orwigsburg, PA 17961
Occasional Child/Youth Worker Application Form

Date: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Business Phone: _____ Email: _____

The following policies reflect our commitment to provide protective care of all children, youth, and volunteers who participate in church sponsored activities.

1. All adult volunteers and staff shall confess Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior, be a member in good standing and attendee of TLHC for at least six months.
2. Agree with TLHC's statement of faith & doctrine.
3. Adults who have perpetrated and/or been convicted of either sexual or physical abuse of a child or children will not be permitted to serve as volunteers in any church-sponsored activity or program for children or youth.
Have you ever **perpetrated** any of these crimes?
Yes ____ No ____
Have you ever been **accused of** or **been convicted** of any of these crimes?
Yes ____ No ____
4. Adult volunteers and staff are to observe the "two adult" rule. This requires that adults make every reasonable effort to avoid being in an isolated setting with children or youth without another youth/child Worker.
5. Volunteers or staff are to immediately report to the Overseeing leader any behavior which seems abusive or inappropriate or any incident reported by a child or adolescent.
6. When an allegation of abuse is brought to the attention of the staff, it will be reported to outside authorities (ChildLine and/or the Police). The volunteer or staff member accused will be informed that he/she may not minister to children or adolescents at TLHC during the investigation.

Do you have any questions about these guidelines? Yes ____ No ____

As a church volunteer, do you agree to observe all church guidelines regarding working with youth or children? Yes ____ No ____

Do you have any personal history of abuse (sexual abuse or abuse of any kind) **that you feel would prevent you** from complying with these guidelines for working with children or reporting child abuse? Yes ____ No ____

Are you willing to attend a training course(s) to become familiar with The Lighthouse Church's Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Guidelines? (This is not mandatory for Occasional Child/Youth Workers) Yes ____ No ____

Signature _____ Date _____

**The Lighthouse Church
Volunteer**

Authorization For Release of Background Information

In connection with my application for volunteer service with THE LIGHTHOUSE CHURCH, I authorize THE LIGHTHOUSE CHURCH and, or, ACCUFAX Div., Southvest Inc., their agent, to solicit background information relative to my criminal record history. I understand that THE LIGHTHOUSE CHURCH may conduct inquiries into my background that may include criminal records, personal references and other public record reports pertaining to me.

I authorize without any reservation, any person, agency, or other entity contacted by THE LIGHTHOUSE CHURCH or ACCUFAX Div., Southvest Inc., their agent for purposes of obtaining background report information, to furnish the above mentioned information.
www.accufax-us.com 1-800-256-8898

I release THE LIGHTHOUSE CHURCH, their respective employees or ACCUFAX Div., Southvest Inc. their agent and employees and all persons, agencies and entities providing information or reports about me from any and all liability arising out of furnishing any such information or reports.

Requested by: 423055

PLEASE PRINT

Last Name _____ First Name _____ MI _____ Date of Birth _____

City of Birth _____ County _____ State _____

AKA/ Maiden Name _____ Social Security No. _____

Please note: if your address is a rural route, or post office box, we must have City & County mail was delivered to.

Current
Address _____ City _____ Co. _____ St. _____ Zip _____

How long at this address? (Months/Years) _____

Previous
Address _____ City _____ Co. _____ St. _____ Zip _____

How long at this address? (Months/Years) _____

Previous
Address _____ City _____ Co. _____ St. _____ Zip _____

How long at this address? (Months/Years) _____

SIGNATURE _____ **DATE** _____

FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY

**The Lighthouse Church
Route 61 North, Orwigsburg, PA 17961
Reference Contact Form**

Person making contact _____

Name of Applicant _____

Reference: Church _____ Person Contacted _____

Date and Time of Contact _____

Method of Contact: Phone _____ Letter _____ Personal Conversation _____

Summary of Conversation (the reference's remarks concerning the applicant's fitness and suitability for youth or children's work):

Reference: Church _____ Person Contacted _____

Date and Time of Contact _____

Method of Contact: Phone _____ Letter _____ Personal Conversation _____

Summary of Conversation (the reference's remarks concerning the applicant's fitness and suitability for youth or children's work):