



# **SAFE SANCTUARIES POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

## **SPRING 2018**

As approved by Church Council on Feb. 25, 2018

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*“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.”*  
*Mark 10:14, 16 (NIV)*

## Foreword

This Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Procedures manual is dedicated to the safety and health of children, youth and vulnerable adults everywhere and specifically to those whom God has entrusted to the care and nourishment of Cannon United Methodist Church. While every effort has been made to provide guidance regarding the appropriate behavior of both the child, youth, or vulnerable adult and their caregiver in their relationship, it is often impossible to anticipate every situation that might arise. As a guideline in our relationships with children, youth or vulnerable adults, it is the intent and spirit of Cannon United Methodist Church, its ministries, programs, staff, and volunteers, that all children and vulnerable adults be treated with respect and dignity and for those working with children to accept the responsibility and privilege of assisting with the spiritual growth of those within our care.

This manual is comprised of several divisions. This general division is directed toward providing policies and guidelines that serve to govern the behavior of relationships with ALL children, youth or vulnerable adults under adult supervision and forms the foundation for the Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Procedures Manuals all Cannon Church ministries. In the unlikely event that there is conflict between this division and the Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Procedures Manual of any Cannon Church ministry, this division takes precedent.

This divisions of this manual are to be used in conjunction with the forms contained in the Safe Sanctuaries Policy Forms Manual to provide for a comprehensive communication of clear safety guidelines, attentiveness to preventing and intervening in the event of incidents, accidents, and incidents of abuse, reporting procedures in the event of the above, and expectations to be followed by staff and volunteers to ensure the safety of all within our church community.

If there are any questions regarding these Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Procedures, please contact the Minister of Administration of Cannon United Methodist Church.

Signed,

Rev. Blair Zant  
Co-Senior Pastor,  
September 2015

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## **SAFE SANCTUARIES POLICY and PROCEDURES GENERAL DIVISION**

### **1. Statement of General Policy**

Under the auspices of the 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008 and 2012 United Methodist Book of Discipline, all United Methodist local churches are charged to create and employ church policies and procedures for the protection of children (birth through 11 years of age), youth (12 through 17 years of age) and vulnerable adults (people age 18 or older with any mental, physical, financial, situational or age-related condition that renders them vulnerable to the decisions and care of others.) These Safe Sanctuaries policies and procedures are intended to reduce the risk of abuse to such persons within the community and the Church.

As a United Methodist Church, and as one part of the Body of Christ which is the Church Universal, Cannon United Methodist Church is committed to upholding and protecting the sacred worth and safety of every person who enters our church home. We strive to provide an environment that is as safe as possible for children, youth and adults who attend the church or any sponsored programs or activities, and to take the necessary precautions to safeguard church leaders from even the suspicion of wrongdoing. In that our vision is *“To bring about life change in children, youth and families through a personal relationship with Christ,”* we seek to welcome all in the grace that we too have received through Jesus and disciple each other to positive life transformation and growth. Abuse in any form runs contrary to our vision and our reading of scripture and will not be tolerated. Therefore, this Safe Sanctuaries document sets a high standard for the hospitality and safeguards by which we will conduct ourselves and our ministry to uphold our vision and conviction.

It is expected that every church member will be made aware of the existence of this policy, its purpose, and how they can help uphold it. Further, it is expected that all staff and volunteers - paid or unpaid - will be well-versed in these policies, will educate others in these policies, and will uphold them to the letter at all times. Again, this is for the protection of all, leader and participant, staff member and church goer, adult and child. Failure to uphold these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, legal action, and/or removal from participation in a given ministry area, depending on the nature of the violation, as determined by the church leadership.

*“And whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me; but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it would be better for him to have a heavy millstone hung around his neck, and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.”*

Matthew 18:5-6 (NASB)

*“Now it is required that those who have been given trust must prove faithful.”*

1 Corinthians 4:2 (NIV)

- 1.1. By fostering awareness of appropriate, as well as inappropriate behaviors in the presence of children less than eighteen (18) years of age and of vulnerable adults, Cannon United Methodist Church, as part of the body of Christ, will demonstrate Christian love and respect for one another.
- 1.2. The Senior Pastor(s) and Minister of Administration, by authority granted by the Church Council of Cannon United Methodist Church, are authorized to administer the Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Procedures of Cannon United Methodist Church. This program shall govern all activities of Cannon United Methodist Church that involve custody of children less than eighteen (18) years of age and of vulnerable adults.
  - 1.2.1. Given the church's mandate to love God by loving our neighbors as ourselves, the implications of the Georgia Mandated Reporter Law, and the reality of abuse in our world, the leadership of Cannon United Methodist Church will commit itself to cultivating and empowering those with the spiritual gifts to teach and serve and lead ministries with children, youth and vulnerable adults, while at the same time, preparing them to lead in justice and mercy, and in protection of their charges, themselves, and the Church.
  - 1.2.2. Compassion and truth will be the guiding forces for any investigation, reporting, or follow-up action that results from the procedures as outlined in this policy.
  - 1.2.3. Congregational support is critical for adherence to this policy. The vision is that every member of the church community would fully understand the policies and procedures represented here, and help keep Cannon Church a Safe Sanctuary.
  - 1.2.4. The Senior Pastor(s) and the Church Council must approve changes in these policies in writing.
  - 1.2.5. All activities of Cannon United Methodist Church that require church workers, who while acting within the scope of their duties, to have custody of children, youth, or vulnerable adults as defined above are covered by this Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Procedures and it is expected that these church workers will adhere to these policies.
  - 1.2.6. Cannon United Methodist Church intends for this Safe Sanctuaries policy and Procedures to apply to any and all other Programs or Ministries that incorporates into its activities the custody of children less than eighteen (18) years of age and/or vulnerable adults.
  - 1.2.7. This policy also applies to any outside group using the church facilities as a host location for their ministries, meetings or activities. Upon applying for usage of facility space, the group representative will receive an outline of our Safe Sanctuaries policy. Their signature will affirm that they have read and understand the safety policies and reporting procedures, and will uphold them. Failure to sign or to comply with this policy will jeopardize their ability to use the Cannon Church facilities.

- 1.2.8. Each leader of a Program or Ministry sponsored by Cannon will annually review their program compliance with this Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Procedures and list potential risk in a brief written report that will be given to the Safe Sanctuaries Program Supervisor. The reports shall include:
  - 1.2.8.1. A listing of any new programs or program changes since last year and the additional risks these changes may incur;
  - 1.2.8.2. A brief summary of any policy violations and the ministry leader's response to these violations;
  - 1.2.8.3. Any patterns of violations of this Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Procedures that suggest that policy changes are needed.
- 1.2.9. Each year, the Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Procedures Supervisor will summarize all the reports received from ministry leaders and submit an Annual Audit Report to the Senior Pastor(s) and Church Council at the last scheduled meeting of the fiscal year.

## **2. Definitions and Georgia Mandatory Reporting Requirements for Abuse of a Minor Child or Youth**

The current Child Abuse Reporting Statute of the State of Georgia became effective July 1, 2012 and remains in effect and applicable to Cannon United Methodist Church's care of children and youth. This statute governs the timely reporting of suspected child abuse to the appropriate authorities and defines who is responsible for the reporting of suspected child abuse, otherwise referred to as a "mandatory reporter". It is important that every church staff member, volunteer, and congregant know what this law includes and how it affects our ministries with children and youth.

This law is found in the Official Code of Georgia Annotated Title 19-7-5. Three key provisions to be fully aware of are:

- 2.1. The law defines "Child service organization personnel" as persons employed by or volunteering at a business or an organization, whether public, private, for profit, not for profit, or voluntary, that provides care, treatment, education, training, supervision, coaching, counseling, recreational programs, or shelter to children. The law further states that Child service organization personnel, "having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused shall report or cause reports of that abuse to be made as provided in this Code section." Therefore, under Georgia law, volunteers and staff members in ministries with children and youth are mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse.
- 2.2. The law requires that reports of suspected child abuse be made "no later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused, by telephone or otherwise, and followed by a report in writing, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated

by the Department of Human Services, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney.”

- 2.3. Clergy must report suspected child abuse, even if that abuse is reported by a perpetrator in the context of a confidential pastoral conversation. The 2012 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, Paragraph 341.5 states, “All clergy of The United Methodist Church are charged to maintain all confidences inviolate, including confessional confidences, except in the cases of suspected child abuse or neglect or in cases where mandatory reporting is required by civil law.”
- 2.4. The complete text of the Georgia child abuse reporting statute in 2012 House Bill 1176, portions of which are quoted above, is posted online at [www.legis.ga.gov](http://www.legis.ga.gov).

### 3. **Mandatory Reporting Requirements for Abuse of a Vulnerable Adult**

Every day, older adults and adults with disabilities are suffering from abuse, neglect, and exploitation; often by people they trust the most. Abusers may be spouses, family members, personal acquaintances, professionals in positions of trust or opportunistic strangers who prey on the vulnerable.

Georgia law requires mandatory reporting of suspected abuse, neglect or exploitation by certain professionals who are **mandated reporters**\*. Failure for a mandated reporter to report abuse, neglect and/or exploitation of a disabled adult or elder person is punishable by a criminal misdemeanor.

#### **All persons are encouraged to report suspected abuse to protective services.**

Persons who report in good faith are immune from liability. Reporting is kept confidential within the parameters of state law (O.C.G.A. § 30-5-4).

The following professionals are always required by Georgia law to report the reasonable belief that an elder person has been abused, neglected or exploited:

- Physicians, osteopaths, interns, residents, other hospital or medical personnel
- Licensed professional counselors
- Clergy
- Nursing personnel
- Social work personnel
- Day-care personnel
- Employees of a public or private agency engaged in professional health related services to elder persons or disabled adults
- Anyone having reasonable cause to believe that a disabled adult or elder person has been exploited.

#### 4. Abuse

##### 4.1. Definitions Of Abuse As Defined By The Georgia Mandated Reporting Law

- 4.1.1. *Physical Abuse* - Physical injury or death inflicted upon a child, youth or vulnerable adult by a parent or caretaker thereof by other than accidental means;
- 4.1.2. *Sexual Abuse* - Commits any sexual offense against a child, youth or vulnerable adult, or engages in any sexual contact with a child, youth or vulnerable adult, or is reasonably suspected to have done so. Or if one makes any kind of sexual advance, request for sexual favors, engages in sexually motivated physical contact, or engages in other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Also includes "Sexual exploitation" which means allowing, permitting, encouraging, or requiring that child, youth or vulnerable adult engage in:
  - Prostitution, as defined in Code Section 16-6-9; or
  - Sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing any visual or print medium depicting such conduct
- 4.1.3. *Neglect (or Exploitation)* - poor supervision, abandonment, or intentional or unintentional disregard by a parent or caretaker of a child, youth or vulnerable adult's basic needs for food, shelter, medical care, or education as evidenced by repeated incidents or a single incident which places the child at substantial risk of harm.[1]

##### 4.2. Additional Definitions Of Abuse

The following definitions of abuse are outlined by Safe Sanctuaries, but do not fall under Mandated Reporting Law report requirements.

- 4.2.1. *Verbal Abuse* - uses derogatory, offensive, or threatening language meant to belittle, scare, manipulate or hurt a child, youth, or vulnerable adult. Such language could be spoken, signed, written, or typed.
- 4.2.2. *Emotional Abuse* - uses any form of communication meant to emotionally manipulate, scare, or incite guilt in a child, youth or vulnerable adult so as to influence their thoughts and behaviors in ways that are not in the best interest of their safety and/or development.
- 4.2.3. *Financial Abuse* - takes or receives money from a child, youth or especially a vulnerable adult in a deceptive or manipulative way that is ultimately not for that minor or adult's best interest.

##### 4.3. Cannon Procedure for Reporting Suspected or Alleged Abuse

- 4.3.1. In accordance with O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5, the Mandatory Reporting Statute, Cannon United Methodist Church has implemented a reporting procedure that complies with the requirements of that statute. This procedure is outlined as follows.
- 4.3.2. Workers and volunteers who suspect or observe **physical or sexual abuse, neglect or exploitation** of a child, youth or vulnerable adult as defined above must report the observation or suspicion to their supervisor

and then to the Senior Pastor. If the Senior Pastor cannot be reached, report must be made to one of the following designated delegates;

Associate Pastor;

Church Business Administrator;

Minister of Children and Families.

Minister of Youth

- 4.3.3. If alleged wrongdoer is ministry supervisor, go directly to senior pastor.
- 4.3.4. If the alleged wrongdoer is the Senior Pastor, the reporter shall inform the Chairperson of the Staff Parish Relations Committee or in their absence, the Chairperson of the Church Council. If neither of those parties is available, the Office of the District Superintendent of the Atlanta/Emory District of the North Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church should be contacted.
- 4.3.5. The initial reporter, and/or supervisor, and Senior Pastor or designated delegate will ensure that the alleged victim is – at the present time and to the best of their ability - safe from imminent threat.
- 4.3.6. The Senior Pastor or designated delegate shall take a report from the person as to the facts and circumstances of what caused the reporter to suspect that child abuse may have occurred. The Senior Pastor or designated delegate is not allowed to make any change to the information provided by the reporter.
- 4.3.7. The Senior Pastor, or designated delegate, does have the right to consult the source of the information and others prior to the making of a report and may provide any additional, relevant, and necessary information when making the report to the appropriate agency. The purpose of such is to gather all initial appropriate information so that a proper report can be made.
- 4.3.8. For written reporting, the Senior Pastor or designated delegate will use the Suspicion of Abuse Report Form.
- 4.3.9. All parties involved in this process shall treat all information as confidential and not discuss the information with others who are not a part of the investigative process.
- 4.3.10. If any reporting party states that DFACS should be contacted, no other discussion is necessary. Senior Pastor (or designated delegate) will contact DFACS and file report. This report must be made within 24 hours of the initial disclosure.
- 4.3.11. The report can be by telephone and followed by a report in writing, if requested, to the child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Services. At this time, such report is to be made to the Department of Family and Children Services during regular business hours of 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. at the following telephone number: 678-518-5500.
- 4.3.12. If the report of suspected child abuse must be made outside of those hours, the reporter is to call 1-855-GACHILD.

- 4.3.13. If the situation requires more immediate emergency attention, the report shall also be made to the Gwinnett County Police Department through 911 or 770-513-5000, or the Gwinnett County District Attorney at 770-822-8400. Otherwise the church will leave it up to the child welfare agency to notify the appropriate police authority or district attorney.
  - 4.3.14. Any time a report is made in accordance with this policy, or Georgia law, the Senior Pastor or designee, shall notify the liability carrier, Cannon Church's legal counsel, and the Atlanta Emory District Office of the United Methodist Church
  - 4.3.15. If in the process of reporting between worker/volunteer and supervisor/Senior Pastor/designee, it is determined by all parties that DFACS does not need to be contacted, an incident report must be filed detailing why this conclusion was reached. This report should be filed confidentially with other Safe Sanctuaries-related files, with a copy placed in Ministry-specific confidential files.
- 4.4. Consequences of Violating Reporting Requirements
- 4.4.1. All members of the church staff and all volunteers will be informed that any person or official required by Georgia law to report a suspected case of child abuse, who knowingly and willfully fails to do so, could be charged with a criminal misdemeanor offense.
  - 4.4.2. Additionally, the church will exercise any and all administrative and civil actions as may be appropriate in response to any violation of church policy.
- 5. Church-Wide Safe Sanctuaries Policies and Procedures**
- 5.1. Two Adult Rule
    - 5.1.1. At all times, when children or youth are present in a room, there will be a good faith effort to ensure that at least two, non-related (to each other) supervising adults present.
    - 5.1.2. An adult should never be alone in a room with a single child.
  - 5.2. Open Door Policy
    - 5.2.1. As appropriate for noise levels and activity, doors to rooms containing children should remain open.
    - 5.2.2. Dutch doors should always been open on the top half when children are in the room.
    - 5.2.3. All classroom and office doors should include a window that should offer an unobscured view into the room when children or vulnerable adults are inside. This allows for doors to be closed even when room is occupied.
    - 5.2.4. Do not allow children or youth into rooms whose doors have no windows.
  - 5.3. Physical Interaction

- 5.3.1. Hugs, kisses, and other forms of appropriate physical affection between workers and those under their care are important for development and are generally suitable in our church setting.
- 5.3.2. Physical affection between an adult and youth or child should be appropriate to the age of the latter. (For example, it is generally appropriate for a four-year-old to sit in a nursery worker's lap and give a kiss on the cheek, however it is not appropriate for a teenager and youth leader or supervisor to behave in this manner.)
- 5.3.3. Any touch between an adult and a child/youth/vulnerable adult should be a response to the latter's need for comforting, encouragement, or affection. It should not be based upon the adult's emotional need. The adult should redirect inappropriate touch initiated by a child, youth or vulnerable adult.
- 5.3.4. Touching and affection should only be given when in the presence of other children or youth workers. This rule is especially important when diapering a baby, helping a young child change clothes, or assisting a child in the use of the restroom.
- 5.3.5. Touching behavior should not give even the appearance of wrongdoing. The behavior of youth and children's ministry workers and supervisors must foster trust at all times; it should be above reproach.
- 5.3.6. A child's preference not to be touched must be respected. Do not force affection upon a reluctant child.
- 5.3.7. All church workers are responsible to protect children under their supervision from inappropriate touching by others.

#### 5.4. 5 Years Older Rule

Volunteers or staff in children's and youth programming must be 5 years older than the oldest child in the group.

#### 5.5. Bathrooms and Diaper Changing Policies

##### 5.5.1. Children: Birth through 5th Grade

- When a child needs to use the restroom, walking the child in an open hallway to the bathroom is permitted. It is not permissible to enter the bathroom with a child alone.
- 0-2 years: Diapers are to be changed in the presence of one additional person in the room. Rubber gloves and parchment paper should be used at all times.
- 3-5 years: when taking children to the restroom, the bathroom door must remain open at all times.
- Elementary aged children will be escorted to the restroom. Main bathroom door should remain open. Verbal cues will be used to manage appropriate behavior and address issues.

- 5.5.2. In the case of Accidents- necessary items will be provided to the child such as clean underwear/clothes, flushable wipes, a bag for wet/dirt clothes, etc. and talk them through changing. We do not assist.
  - 5.5.3. In an extreme case that assistance is necessary—we try to have female to female or male to male assistance. Two adults in the room with the door to the hallway propped open.
  - 5.5.4. If children are on campus but away from the main church building, such as the field, pool, or the playground, and need to return to the main building, they must be escorted.
  - 5.5.5. It is not appropriate or permissible to assist children or youth if they need to be wiped. In cases where children are not completely potty trained a flushable wipe will be provided for the child, and notification to the parent.
  - 5.5.6. Youth are permitted to go to the restroom on their own. Persons must use restrooms assigned to their sex. Only one person in a stall at a time.
- 5.6. Discipline
- 5.6.1. To address inappropriate behavior, two forms of discipline will be used:
    - Distraction/Redirection - student(s) will be encouraged to focus on something else besides the person, situation, or object causing the inappropriate behavior.
    - Removal - student(s) will be removed from the situation.
  - 5.6.2. Corporal Punishment will never be used as a form of discipline.
- 5.7. Nametags and Clothing  
Children’s ministry volunteers and staff will wear a nametag and/or clothing identifying them as Volunteer or Staff.
- 5.8. Security
- 5.8.1. Key coded doors are located on the entrances to 1st and 3rd floor classroom hallways. These doors will remain locked when students are present.
  - 5.8.2. Visitors may access the hallways only when escorted by staff, or with the permission of the church or preschool administrative staff member.
- 5.9. Check In and Out systems for Arrival and Dismissal
- 5.9.1. All students and parents must adhere to the Check In and Check Out procedures of the ministry area and event they are attending.
  - 5.9.2. Parents are fully responsible for their child when they are present on the campus and not officially checked-in to a ministry area.
  - 5.9.3. Children and youth must remain in the ministry area and program until retrieved by a parent/guardian using Check Out Procedure. In the case of youth who can transport themselves, students are expected to remain at the event until its official conclusion. Students needing to leave early should do so only after making student ministry leaders aware.

## 6. **Social Media Policy**

- 6.1. We will endeavor to protect the privacy and identity of all persons less than eighteen (18) years of age and all vulnerable adults in online writings, postings, and discussions, and in any use of social media or networking.
  - 6.1.1. Adult employees and staff must not post photos or video that identifies children, youth or vulnerable adults on any online site or printed publication without written consent from the adult individual, parent, or legal guardian as applicable.
  - 6.1.2. All Facebook groups and pages associated with Preschools, minor children will be designated as “closed” groups, requiring all those who wish to gain access to be approved by the page administrators. These administrators will also ensure the removal of individuals who graduate from or leave the ministry, or who violate safety and behavioral standards.
  - 6.1.3. All church-related profile-based, media-sharing, video-hosting or SMS messaging must have at least two administrators. If an administrator is no longer associated with the ministry, that individual’s administrative status must be revoked.
  - 6.1.4. Photos of minors may only be published or posted after a photo release has been signed by their legal parent/guardian. Photos used in other mediums, such as church publications, websites, blogs, etc. must not include any identifying information of minors or vulnerable adults.
- 6.2. We will maintain appropriate healthy relational boundaries with minors and vulnerable adults.
  - 6.2.1. No adult shall initiate social media connection requests (Friend Request, Follow Request, Circle Requests, etc.) with a minor or vulnerable adult. Whether an adult may accept a request from a minor is up to the discretion of the adult, in consultation with the adult in charge of the ministry area and the supervising pastor. Regardless of the decision that is reached, this practice should be uniformly upheld by all adult staff and volunteers.
  - 6.2.2. Any online or social networking conversation with minors or vulnerable adults shall occur in open channels.
  - 6.2.3. When digitally communicating (emailing, texting, tweeting, Facebook messaging, etc.) with a minor directly, adults should copy another adult (ideally the parent, guardian, or fellow ministry leader) on the message, or post it in a public venue (i.e.: a Facebook wall as opposed to a private message). Group or bulk emails should also include at least one other adult in the distribution list. This will allow adults to maintain the “two adults present” Safe Sanctuaries standard when using social media.
  - 6.2.4. Social media, even though it offers convenient and private channels, is not an appropriate medium for counseling - especially with minors or vulnerable adults. Begin or transition pastoral conversation into an

approved Safe Sanctuary model (i.e.: office with windows, two adult rule-abiding setting, etc.)

- 6.3. We shall not engage in the creation, viewing or distribution of pornography. Engaging in the above stated behavior is a violation of civil laws and clergy ethics and can lead to incarceration and the revocation of clergy credentials.
- 6.4. We shall not engage in, encourage, or condone cyberbullying.
  - 6.4.1. Cyberbullying is when a child or youth is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child or youth using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones. It has to have a minor on both sides, or at least have been instigated by a minor against another minor. Once adults become involved, it is cyber-harassment or cyberstalking.
  - 6.4.2. Every children's ministry, youth ministry, and adult volunteer training session should include in its teachings and ministry Code of Conduct a session on the types and consequences of cyberbullying, including how to identify it and how to report it.
- 6.5. We shall educate young people in the effective ways of using social media and technology to live out their Christian witness in what they write, post, share, and view. We all must understand and teach to minors and vulnerable adults, that once something is posted on the web, sent via email or texted, it is impossible to fully recover or erase it.

*Note: There should be no expectation of privacy or reasonable expectation that the information stops with the person for whom it was intended.*

## **7. Reporting Violations of Safe Sanctuaries Policies and Procedures**

- 7.1. If witnessed by another adult, the eyewitness should make the offending adult aware of their behavior and offer correction.
- 7.2. Violation and response should be noted with ministry area supervisor.
- 7.3. Staff members should refer to their employee handbook for full explanation of violation responses.

## **8. Incidents, Accidents, Injuries, and Emergency Response Procedures**

- 8.1. Incidents
  - 8.1.1. A Incident is defined as an action by an individual child or youth or interaction between two or more children/youth that violates the above policies, or is otherwise deemed inappropriate, and requires response, redirection, and/or disciplinary action, but does not necessitate mandatory reporting as defined above.
  - 8.1.2. Incidents and the response used should be documented using the "Incident Report Form" found in the Forms section of this document, and submitted to the ministry area supervisor.
- 8.2. Accidents and Injuries

- 8.2.1. An accident is defined as a physical injury requiring any degree of attention
- 8.2.2. All facility and procedural safety standards should be upheld to the best of one's ability to prevent an accident from occurring.
- 8.2.3. Location of First Aid/AED Units: First Aid kits are located in the kitchen and in the office workroom on the 1st floor of the sanctuary building, in the Acolyte Room adjacent to the sanctuary narthex on the 2nd floor of the sanctuary building, in the Preschool Office on the 1st floor of the education building, and in the After School Office on the 3rd floor of the education building. AED units are located in the Acolyte Room off the sanctuary narthex on the 2nd floor of the sanctuary building and in the stairwell on the 1st floor adjacent to the reception area.
- 8.2.4. In the event of an accident or injury, one adult should remain with the injured individual. Remove anything that could cause further injury. Treat the injury as appropriate. The other adult(s) should secure the safety of the other individuals present, and get additional help - medical or otherwise - as needed.

8.3. Emergency Response Procedures:

- 8.3.1. Train in and uphold emergency response
- 8.3.2. Crisis Succession Plans
  - Church Business Administrator
  - Senior Pastor
  - Minister of Community Outreach
  - Associate Pastor

9. **Enlistment and Screening Policies for Volunteer and Paid Positions**

- 9.1. Individuals considered for any volunteer leadership role or recurring volunteer commitment in any area of children or youth ministry must have attended Cannon United Methodist Church for a minimum of six (6) months and be at least five (5) years older than the oldest participant before being allowed to serve in these areas. They must also complete the following:
  - Application for Volunteer Workers in Children's and Youth Ministries.
  - Authorization for Criminal Court and Department of Motor Vehicles Records Check;
  - Online Safe Sanctuaries Training module
  - Evaluation Interview with Minister or Ministry Leader
- 9.2. Individuals considered for a position as a Stephen Minister or visitation minister must have attended Cannon United Methodist Church for a minimum of twelve (12) months before being allowed to serve in these areas. They must also complete the following:
  - Application for Stephen Ministry
  - Authorization for Criminal Court and Department of Motor Vehicles Records Check;

- Interview with one (1) or more trained Stephen Leaders
  - Fifty (50) Hours of group training lead by trained Stephen Leaders and/or professional counselor
  - Online Safe Sanctuaries Training module
- 9.3. All individuals considered for a paid staff position will complete the Online Safe Sanctuaries Training module in addition to all employment forms and applications.
- 9.4. All workers, volunteer or paid, will be asked to provide personal references on their respective applications.
- 9.5. The steps listed above will need to be completed prior to the person being allowed to work or serve.
- 9.6. Individuals who have been arrested for, charged with, under probation for, or convicted of either sexual or physical abuse cannot serve with nor will they be employed for any church sponsored activity or ministry.
- 9.7. Youth-age volunteers working in Children’s Ministry must be under the direct supervision of a Safe Sanctuaries trained adult supervisor at all times.
- 9.8. Children and Youth participating in volunteer opportunities with vulnerable adults must be under the direct supervision of a Safe Sanctuaries trained adult supervisor at all times.

**10. Important Contact Information**

Cannon UMC	770-972-5463
Pastor On-Call	678-501-6445
Church Administrator	678-501-6425 or 770-235-8654
DFACS	1-855-422-4453 (24-hour line)

**11. Forms**

- 11.1. Volunteer Application
- 11.2. Accident/Incident Report

[1] Central Child Support Registry, O.C.G.A. § 49-5-180

Cannon Church Children's Ministry Team Application

(18 and Older)

S.S. Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
B.G.C. Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Soc. Sec. # \_\_\_\_\_ Marital Status: \_\_\_\_\_ Driver's License #: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Best Method of Contact: Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ Text \_\_\_\_\_

Profession: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you attended Cannon Church? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you currently serving at Cannon? If yes, where? \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any special skills, interests or experience \_\_\_\_\_

What is your religious background? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ? (Please circle) Yes No

If yes, briefly describe your relationship with Jesus Christ: (please use additional paper if needed) \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been charged with, or convicted of any of the following:

Child abuse	Yes	No
Actual or attempted sexual molestation of a minor	Yes	No
Any other crime	Yes	No

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in the following age group/area:

Early Childhood (0-2yrs) \_\_\_\_\_ Preschool (3-5yrs) \_\_\_\_\_ Elementary (K-4<sup>th</sup>) \_\_\_\_\_ 5<sup>th</sup> Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Check-In Team/Host \_\_\_\_\_ Where needed most \_\_\_\_\_

I am available during the following service(s): 8am \_\_\_\_\_ 9:30 \_\_\_\_\_ 11:00 \_\_\_\_\_

I am available to serve: 1x a month \_\_\_\_\_ 2x a month \_\_\_\_\_ Weekly \_\_\_\_\_

All the information I have provided in the process of applying to work with the children of Cannon Church is true & correct to the best of my knowledge. I voluntarily & knowingly authorize any person named herein as a contact to give to the staff of Cannon Church any information they may have regarding my character & fitness for working with children. I voluntarily & knowingly fully release & discharge all such contacts from liability for any evaluation provided of me. I also grant Cannon Church permission to perform a personal background check & release information pertaining to such.

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

Reviewing Staff Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to Sasha LaBonte, Children's Ministry Director. All information provided on this form will be held in a confidential file by the Business Administrator.

**Accident/Incident Report – Cannon UMC**

Child/Youth's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Ministry Area/Event \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Accident/Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Injury/Illness/Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Accident/Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

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Describe the incident/accident. (Use back of form for additional space)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Care Given/Actions Taken: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Completing Form: \_\_\_\_\_ Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Arrival of/to Medical Responder: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Caregiver that Responded: \_\_\_\_\_

Caregiver Response & First Aid: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Information: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Contacted:    Yes    No                      Child Returned to Program:    Yes    No

How parent was contacted:    Phone            Email            Other            Note Home

Name of Parent/Guardian Contacted: \_\_\_\_\_

Time Parent/Guardian Contacted: \_\_\_\_\_

Who Contacted the Parent: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Contacts or Actions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Child Care Provider Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_