

SEVERNA PARK EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
(SPEP)
CHILD AND/OR YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY

Purpose: This SPEP policy is designed to protect the children, youth and adult volunteers of SPEP by establishing a positive church environment that conforms to the biblical model for the raising and nourishing of children by Christian adults. For the purpose of this policy the term “volunteers” refers to volunteer workers in the SPEP children and youth ministries.

1. All volunteers must first be approved by the Session. Volunteers assuming a teaching or leading role within any of the church’s approved children or youth ministries must either have been an active member of Severna Park Evangelical Presbyterian Church for at least six months immediately prior to assuming their position or have been granted special permission by the Session.
2. Volunteers who are not members may only serve in non-teaching roles if approved by the Session. These volunteers must have been regular attenders of the church for a minimum of six months immediately prior to assuming their position and have been through the application procedure. They must always serve alongside an approved member of SPEP and will never be left alone with children or youth.
3. SPEP will endeavor to adhere to the "two approved workers" rule in all of its children and youth programs. People related to each other (spouses, siblings, parent/child teams, etc) may serve together provided there is a third non-related volunteer serving alongside them.
4. All volunteers must complete a Children’s and Youth Ministry Volunteer Application.
5. All adult volunteers and all professional staff will be required to undergo a background investigation.
6. If any activity requires an adult staff member or volunteer to transport a minor child not their own, or requires that the worker be alone with a minor child not their own, the parents of the child will be requested to sign a parent permission slip authorizing the adult staff member or volunteer to transport, or be alone with, their child.
7. Church leaders, and/or children and youth program leaders, must ensure that there are adequate approved supervisory personnel at all activities.
8. Any overnight youth activity must be approved by the church leadership in advance of the activity, to include the identification of the adult supervisors of the activity.
9. The nurseries through kindergarten are to operate under a positive ID program. A child must be signed in by his or her parent and/or guardian, and the child will be released only to his or her parent and/or guardian, after proper identification has been presented. The ID requirement can be waived if the volunteer personally knows the parent or guardian. Infants will not be released to anyone who is under the age of eighteen.

10. All volunteers must complete an orientation training program which will include the requirement for them to read and initial the "SPEP Child and/or Youth Protection Policy."
11. All records, including all volunteer applications, reference interviews and results of all criminal records checks will be kept in a secure storage cabinet in the church office. Only the Session and those authorized by Session will have access to these files. Approved records retention procedures will be followed.
12. Volunteers are to be approved annually for re-appointment to their current or new positions.
13. The steps for reporting suspected inappropriate behavior will be:
 - All volunteers are to report any suspicious or inappropriate behavior immediately to the supervisor, or ministry staff member, of the program/activity.
 - Supervisor/staff, after evaluating the report, are to report any incident of possible inappropriate behavior to the Senior Pastor.
 - The Senior Pastor will follow the procedures established by the Session.

Only the SPEP Session can change and/or amend this policy.

APPROVED: March 2, 2006

AMENDED: September 6, 2007