

**Safe Sanctuary Policy
of the
Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church**

Revision 1 May 15, 2007
Revision 2 December 19, 2007 Approved by Congregation June 29, 2008
Revision 3 November 8, 2011 Approved by Deacons
Revision 4 May 21, 2019 Approved by Council
Revision 5 September 17, 2019 Approved by Council
Revision 6 November 3, 2019 Approved by congregational consensus
Revision 7 May 19, 2010 Approved by Church Council
Revision 8 November 2022 Approval by congregational consensus

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Safe Sanctuary Policy of the Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church

Section I—Introduction and Purpose

It is our desire that the Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church be a safe and nurturing place (or “sanctuary,” in its broadest sense) in which all may worship, learn and serve. We recognize that abuse, whether physical, emotional, sexual or neglect, happens in the church. We therefore establish this Safe Sanctuary Policy as a first step to creating and maintaining a church environment that is safe from abuse and is nurturing for children, youth, and adults.

The following guidelines and procedures are intended to reduce the risk of incidents of abuse, to educate ourselves regarding abuse, and to develop clear direction for dealing with reports of abuse. In order to accomplish this, we will follow the safety measures outlined in this policy in the selection and recruitment of staff and volunteers; we will implement operational procedures as defined in this policy in all programs and events; we will educate our staff and volunteers regarding the implementation of these procedures; we will have a clearly defined process for reporting a suspected incident of abuse that conforms to the requirements of Kansas state law. We will communicate to the congregation and be prepared to respond to all involved, including the media, should an incident occur.

This policy was developed by Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church in accordance with recommendations from Mennonite Church USA and the Western District Conference. Materials from the Western District Conference Resource Library including Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church as well as policies from other churches were reviewed for the development of this policy.

Misuse of positions of power by any staff or volunteer representing Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church will not be tolerated nor will abusive behaviors among members or attendees. In all of our ministries, this congregation is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each person is treated at all times with respect and honored as a child of God.

Section II—Terms and Definitions

Abuse: Behavior that violates the physical or emotional well-being of another, particularly a person having less authority or power than the perpetrator. This policy addresses four types of abuse: emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse and physical neglect.

Abuse of Power A misuse of power by someone in a position of authority and/or privilege who can use the leverage they have to oppress persons in a vulnerable position.

Adult: A person at least 23 years of age.

Caregiver: Individuals that provide care to people who need some degree of ongoing assistance with everyday tasks on a regular or daily basis. The recipients of care can live either in residential or institutional settings, range from children to older adults, and have chronic illnesses or disabling conditions. This is termed “informal or unpaid care” because it is provided by family or friends rather than by paid caregivers.

Church Staff: Any person serving at LAMC in an official, paid capacity.

Child or Youth: A person under 18 years of age and 18-year-olds until the completion of high school and through the summer past high school graduation.

College-Age: A person 18 through 22 years of age.

Church Council: The decision-making body of LAMC, composed of the members of the Boards; the chairs of Church Council, the Congregation, and the standing committees under Council; the Treasurer and Church Clerk.

Elder abuse: Includes all other definitions of abuse but is expanded to include harm inflicted by intentional actions, as well as failure to act. Elder abuse can affect anyone who is 60 years old or older and is often perpetrated by a caregiver or other person of trust.

Emotional or Psychological Abuse: Verbal or nonverbal behaviors that inflict anguish, mental pain, fear, or distress on an individual. Examples include humiliation or disrespect, verbal and non-verbal threats, harassment, and geographic or interpersonal isolation.

Fiduciary Abuse: A situation in which a person who is the caretaker of, or who stands in a position of trust to an adult, takes, secretes, or appropriates their money or property for any use or purpose not in the due and lawful execution of the adult’s trust or benefit.

Financial Abuse: The illegal, unauthorized, or improper use of a vulnerable adult’s money, benefits, belongings, property, or assets for the benefit of someone other than the adult.

LAMC: Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church

Physical Abuse: Infliction of physical harm or the causation of an individual’s deterioration, and may include, but shall not be limited to, maltreatment or exploitation to the extent the individual’s health is endangered

Physical Neglect: Acts or omissions by a parent, guardian, caregiver, or person responsible for the care of the individual resulting in harm, or presenting a likelihood of harm, and the acts or omissions are not due solely to the lack of financial. This term may include but shall not be limited to: failure to provide with food, clothing, or shelter necessary to sustain the life and health of the individual.

Safe Sanctuary: The continual process of working to ensure emotional, physical and spiritual safety of all persons, and especially those vulnerable to abuse. Safety also includes setting clear boundaries, open communication, and keeping persons who harm others accountable.

Safe Sanctuary Committee: A standing committee of the Church Council, responsible and authorized to administer the specific procedures of this policy, including conducting background checks, contacting references, maintaining records, and coordinating the annual training sessions.

Sexual Abuse: sexualized behavior that occurs in a relationship where one party has more power than the other and meaningful consent is difficult, if not impossible. Sexual abuse takes advantage of another in order to use, control or intimidate them for one's own purposes. It is violence that has been sexualized. It can include but is not limited to actual physical contact of a sexual nature, such as hugs, kisses, touching, assault and intercourse. Sexual abuse can also involve more covert acts such as using sexual innuendo or pornography in the relationship, emotional and spiritual manipulation, or inappropriate disclosures of a personal nature regarding sexual matters.

Sexual Assault: Sexual assault refers to sexual contact or behavior that occurs without explicit consent of the victim.

Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature. Negative comments about a gender as a group may be a form of sexual harassment.

Sexual violence is a sexual act that is committed or attempted by another person without freely given consent of the victim or against someone who is unable to consent or refuse. It includes but is not limited to: forced or alcohol/ drug facilitated penetration of a victim; forced or alcohol/drug facilitated incidents in which the victim was made to penetrate a perpetrator or someone else; non-physically pressured unwanted penetration; intentional sexual touching; or non-contact acts of a sexual nature.

Sexual violence can also occur when a perpetrator forces or coerces a victim to engage in sexual acts with a third party. Sexual violence involves a lack of freely given consent as well as situations in which the victim is unable to consent or refuse. *See addendum E For more definitions related to sexual violence*

Survivor of Sexual Abuse: A person who has experienced sexual abuse.

Volunteer: Any person volunteering their time to serve in any of LAMC's programs or activities with children or adults, including but not limited to children or youth programs, including nursery, Sunday School, Bible School, mentors, youth sponsors and transportation providers.

Vulnerable Adult: A person who is or may be for any reason unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

Section III—Qualifications for Volunteers

1. The "six-month" rule. All volunteers must be regular attendees, having participated in the life of the congregation for at least six months prior to being considered for a volunteer position in the children's or youth ministries of the church.

2. Age requirement. Adults may work with persons of all ages. College age volunteers may work with children 5th grade or younger, or with youth 6th-12th grade when supervised by an adult. Volunteers who are in 6th-12th grade may work with children 5th grade or younger when supervised by an adult.

3. Exception for childcare. Childcare provided for church programs and events shall follow the above age requirements, with the following exception. For smaller events or events held other than Sunday mornings, youth 6th-12th grade may care for persons 5th grade and younger, provided an adult is on the premises, and parents/guardians of children receiving childcare have given their verbal or written consent.

4. Training. All volunteers supervising children and youth are required to complete annual training coordinated by the Safe Sanctuary Committee to keep volunteers informed of church policies and state laws regarding child abuse. All members of the congregation are strongly encouraged to participate in annual training. Training will occur with any new hire BEFORE the person begins the job.

5. Background checks. A background check will be REQUIRED for any paid staff prior to employment, new Sunday School teachers, nursery volunteers, or others working with youth before starting*. Background checks must be conducted by LAMC or MCUSA/WDC to be considered valid; background checks provided by others are not sufficient. Random background checks may be conducted on volunteers as well as staff at any point during the period of their service. This may include the DCF (Department of Children and Family Services) Child Central Registry, the Kansas Offender Registration database, Sedgwick County criminal records, Sedgwick County domestic records, Kansas Bureau of Investigation Registered Offender database, Kansas driving records, the Federal Bureau of Investigation records, and the Mennonite Abuse Prevention List (MAP list).

*If there is a backlog on processing background checks parents and guardians will be notified in order to provide care and transparency.

6. Criminal or civil records of abuse. Persons who have been convicted of any criminal offense involving physical or sexual abuse, or who have had a verdict or judgment rendered against them in any civil action related to physical or sexual abuse will not be allowed to work with or interact with children or youth, during church events or serve on LAMC boards or committees. The same limits will be placed on persons who have allegations pending against them or are on the Mennonite Abuse Prevention List (MAP List).

<https://www.themaplist.org/>

7. Additional circumstances and criteria. The pastor(s), in consultation with the chairs of the Board of Deacons, the Staff Relations Committee or the Safe Sanctuary Committee, may determine when additional circumstances preclude any individual from serving as a volunteer.

Section IV—Operational Procedures

1. Windows. In any room where children or youth activities or one on one adult meetings are taking place, there shall be a window in the door (and the window shall remain uncovered), or the door shall remain open. All pastors' office doors must have a window.

2. The two-adult rule. Two unrelated adults should always be present in rooms where children's and youth activities are taking place. If only one adult is available for a given room, a second adult shall be designated as a “floater” and shall check in as often as possible. This is a person that can check in on classes; this helps keep things “interruptible and observable” which is an important part of Safe Sanctuaries.

3. Restroom procedures. If an adult needs to help a child in the restroom, the restroom door should remain open. Parents/guardians of small children are encouraged to take their children to the restroom before Sunday School or other supervised activities. If a young child is assisted in the restroom, the volunteer will inform the parents or guardians when they get the child at the end of class. Please prop open door if helping a child who is not related to you

4. Discipline. Discipline shall follow guidelines of attached Positive Classroom Management / Responding to Disruptions. (See Appendix C)

5. Offsite activities. The unrelated two-adult rule applies to both onsite and offsite youth activities. Parents/guardians should be notified before a group is taken offsite for an activity, and written consent obtained.

6. Overnight youth activities. The unrelated two-adult rule shall apply to overnight activities. At least two adults shall accompany youth on all church-sponsored overnight trips or activities. One-adult-to-one-child sleeping arrangements are not permitted. Written parental/guardian consent shall be obtained before the overnight activity. When there are male and female youth, there should also be male and female adults.

7. Family Promise Adult Chaperons. Overnight Family Promise adult chaperons will be provided with separate secure rooms for sleeping.

8. Mentor/Mentee activities. Because of the one-to-one nature of the mentor/mentee relationship, the two-adult rule is not always practical. Therefore, parents/guardians shall give written consent prior to their child’s participation in the mentor/mentee program. Mentors shall follow the recommendations "Mentoring the Safe Sanctuary Way" from WDC. (See Appendix D)

9. Scheduled church functions. All activities scheduled by LAMC or held at LAMC are advised to include a minimum of three people. For any committee meeting or activity at LAMC, if only 2 people show up, persons are under no obligation to conduct the meeting. For one-on one pastoral meetings it is advised to have another person in the building.

10. Parents are responsible for their children when at LAMC for an unofficial LAMC event

11. Dating

- It is never appropriate for a pastor or staff member or other adult participant at LAMC to have a dating, romantic, sexual or other secretive relationship with a child or youth.
- Pastor and staff dating guidelines are addressed in Personnel Policy.
- If any member of the congregation has concerns about any relationship within the LAMC church community, this is to be reported to a Deacon, a member of the Safe

Sanctuary Committee, or a pastor for further investigation as described in Section VI--Procedures for Reporting and Response to an Incident. An accountability team may be formed to work with the persons involved.

12. Online child and adolescent safety (note policy Approved by LAMC Sept 2019 but not integrated into the SS policy)

1. The identity of children and adolescents will remain confidential.
 - a. Recording of church services will omit children's time.
 - b. Participants will be informed when the service is being recorded.
 - c. Never post pictures or videos of minors without written parental permission.
 - d. When a picture or video is posted, never include minors' names.
 - e. Addresses, phone numbers, email addresses and year of birth are not to be posted in public spaces.
2. Ask parents' permission ahead of time to communicate with their child or youth (usually as a group).
3. Continue to apply the two-adult rule.
 - a. Adults should not initiate one-on-one conversations via social media with minors.
 - b. Use platforms that allow multiple adults to be logged in at the same time preferably. If it is a single-user platform, or if more than one adult cannot be present at the same time, allow another user to have adult administrative privileges to go in and monitor accounts on a regular basis. This helps meet the "window in a door" or "open door" policies familiar for in-person meetings. Also, consider having an adult (like a parent) on the youth side of the call or video simply appear and wave, acknowledging that the adult knows this conversation is taking place.
 - c. If a minor initiates online communication with an adult (youth pastor, sponsor), the adult should keep a log of name/date/time/topic of conversation.
 - d. If an adult ends up in a one-on-one conversation with a youth, it is VERY important for that adult to have a written record if possible. At minimum, document the time, date, and topic; save the actual text of the conversation if possible. Informing a parent about the occurrence of a one-on-one interaction or conversation can be done either before (if scheduled in advance) or after the conversation (if the conversation is spur of the moment) takes place is responsible and honors confidentiality regarding the topics of conversation.

4. Use ministry-based email, Instagram, Twitter accounts to remind yourself that this social media interaction is ministry.

a. Use your own name. Do not use handles or usernames.

b. Use platforms that allow for some kind of record to be created. Save chats or texts. Save or record videos. Create an activity log for which an adult is logged into an account and using a ministry-based platform (day, time, basic notes about who conversations were with) and keep it current.

c. Use “ministry-based” accounts instead of personal accounts. This helps everyone understand that the conversations are part of ministry and outreach. It also allows for multiple administrators. This also allows you to easily create and share links as well as use password protection features, to avoid unwanted guests crashing your online gathering.

d. Adults should never send connection requests from a personal account. If a youth reaches out, the adult can connect, but the adult should also inform the church/staff of that connection and move the exchange to a ministry account.

5. Create a basic schedule and communicate that with youth and parents, so that they know when a ministry-based account is being monitored or in use. Anything on that schedule, or that comes from a person logged in to the ministry-based account should be considered as a representative for the church and conversations should follow covenants and guidelines that would be used for in-person gatherings.

a. Document who attends which online gathering, as you would in-person.

b. Make notes about attendance and plan group chats/online activities when possible. Document who is there, just as you would take attendance in person.

6. Maintain the “five years older” rule online. Young adults online with youth for youth ministry meetings should be at least 24 years old.

Section V—Education and Training

1. All persons working with children are required to complete a yearly training on abuse prevention, planned by the Safe Sanctuary Committee. Resources and training by Western District Conference, or Dove’s Nest can be utilized. This training shall cover such information as:

- The policies and procedures within this Safe Sanctuary policy
- Recognizing signs and symptoms of child abuse
- Responding to a child’s report of abuse (Appendix B: Tips to Remember)
- Procedures for reporting abuse
- Behavioral expectations for volunteers, staff and leaders in children’s programs

- Location and use of all first aid and safety equipment

2. Pastoral staff will be required to comply with the Western District Conference training mandate. As of the writing of this document Western District requires initial training with employment and additional training every 3 years.

Section VI--Procedures for Reporting and Response to an Incident

1. All persons working with children, youth or vulnerable adults are strongly encouraged to report actual or suspected abuse or neglect. (Kansas state law requires certain professionals to report if they have reason to suspect that a child has been injured as a result of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. A complete listing of these “mandated reporters” can be found in “A Guide To Reporting Abuse Child Abuse And Neglect In Kansas,”) If the child or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, the adult shall call local law enforcement (911). Otherwise, they shall call the Kansas Hot Line to Report Abuse and Neglect (1-800-922-5330) for children and adults to file the report. In the State of Kansas if you are a mandated reporter in your job, then you are a mandated reporter in all settings including church. LAMC considers pastors and staff mandatory reporters.

<http://www.dcf.ks.gov/services/PPS/Documents/GuidetoReportingAbuseandNeglect.pdf>

Hard copies are available in the LAMC Library and on the table outside Offices.

2. The process at LAMC shall in no way interfere with the investigation of DCF or law enforcement. The direction and investigation of these agencies take precedence over the LAMC process. The congregation will be informed when any member, attendee, volunteer, pastor or staff is under investigation for child abuse. The majority of the time, it is recommended that the accused be named.

3. If you have concerns related to abuse,-neglect, or the safety and wellbeing of others

- Call Kansas Hot Line to Report Abuse and Neglect (1-800-922-5330).
- Then notify the pastor(s) or the Board of Deacons as soon as possible.
- Complete the “Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church Safe Sanctuary Incident Report Form” (Appendix A)

4. If the accused is a volunteer, staff member, member or attendee of LAMC, they shall be immediately suspended from all duties or activities that would place them in direct contact with children or vulnerable adults until an investigation has been completed. This policy is inclusive of accusations by persons outside of LAMC towards members and participants of LAMC. The Staff Relations Committee, the Board of Deacons, the Church Council, the Congregational Chair or the Safe Sanctuary Committee may initiate suspension. Investigation coordination is the responsibility of Staff Relations, Board of Deacons or Safe Sanctuary Committee. Initial suspension can be verbal or email followed by a signed letter.

5. Regarding allegations of abuse: the reality is that **90% to 98%** of sexual violence reports are **true** and only 2% to 8% are false (2010).

<https://www.nsvrc.org/statistics> and <https://www.parentsformeganslaw.org/statistics-child-sexual-abuse/> If the allegations are found to be false, the accused will be reinstated to their

previous role. The Staff Relations Committee or Board of Deacons will invite all parties involved to participate in a reconciliation process.

6. If the person accused of abuse is a staff member, immediately notify the pastor(s), the Board of Deacons Chair, the Church Council Chair, the Congregational Chair, the Safe Sanctuary Chair and the Staff Relations Chair. This team shall follow the same guidelines as stated above in 2 and 3, and the accused person shall be suspended with/or without pay during the investigation.

7. If the person accused of abuse is a member or attendee, immediately notify the pastor(s), the Board of Deacons Chair, the Church Council Chair, the Congregational Chair, the Safe Sanctuary Chair and the Staff Relations Chair. This team shall follow the same guidelines as stated above in 2 and 3.

8. If the accused is a pastor, immediately notify the co-pastor, the Board of Deacons Chair, the Church Council Chair, the Congregational Chair, the Safe Sanctuary Chair and the Staff Relations Chair. This team shall follow the same guidelines as stated above in 2 and 3. The Staff Relations Committee will suspend the accused pastor with/or without pay during the investigation, and will delegate the pastor's duties to others as needed.

9. If any member of these committees is a relative, close friend or has any other close relationship with the accused they will be recused from any discussion about the situation. Western District Conference shall be consulted and one other non-Mennonite agency shall also be consulted. These agencies include but are not limited to GRACE (Godly Response to Abuse in Christian Environments), Into Account and Faith Trust Institute.

10. When a pastor/staff member/volunteer/member/attendee is suspended from the congregation, the congregation will be notified by the Congregational Chair, or the Church Council Chair or Board of Deacons Chair within one week. Notification will include name of person suspended. The congregation will be notified of the decisions made at the end of the investigation and clearly informed of the guidelines placed on said person by the accountability team.

11. Only the following persons shall be authorized to speak to the media on behalf of LAMC unless they are the one accused: the pastor(s), the chairs of the congregation, Church Council, or Board of Deacons, or another person designated upon joint agreement of the above persons. This does not preclude the victim or the accused speaking to the media on their own behalf or with the support of an advocate.

12. If a child, youth or vulnerable adult talks to you about abuse or neglect that is happening outside the facilities, persons, and programs of LAMC, use this policy (Appendix A), or "A Guide to Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect in Kansas," as a guide to reporting the incident.

13. Each situation will be handled individually and confidentially. This policy shall serve as a guideline for any action taken. The safety of persons at LAMC overrides the offender's right to confidentiality.

14. If you observe anything regarding the care of our children at LAMC that concerns you or the welfare of any adult attending the congregation, please fill out the Safe Sanctuary Incident Report Form (appendix A) and tell the pastor(s), a member of the Board of Deacons or a member of the Safe Sanctuary Committee, who can assist you in making a report to the Kansas Hot Line to Report Abuse and Neglect (1-800-922-5330).

Section VII--Statement Regarding Integration of Offenders

Sexual abuse/assault is a crime. Here is a link for the Kansas definitions of sexual crimes.
https://apps.rainn.org/policy/policy-crime-definitions.cfm?state=Kansas&group=3&_ga=2.113209155.65409141.1667708299-671220382.1619574157

When we use “sin” to define sexual violence and dealing with perpetrators, it is easier to jump to forgiveness. When we talk about crimes, we may go first to justice, truth telling and accountability. This is not to say we should not forgive a perpetrator; however, forgiveness comes **after** justice, truth telling, boundary setting and accountability. This is important for the perpetrator as well as the victim. Also, forgiveness is wholly up to the victim and should not be pushed by the church.

As one component of establishing this church as a “safe sanctuary,” any member or regular attender who has emotionally, physically or sexually abused another person or has been convicted of a felony involving harm to another individual (whether prior to or current with their participation in this church, and whether the abused person is within or outside of this congregation) or is currently accused of abusive behavior shall follow a protocol of accountability established for this purpose.

A) The perpetrator/accused shall meet regularly with an accountability group, to be appointed by the Board of Deacons. Guidelines for the members of the accountability group are:

1. No relative, close friend or acquaintance of the accused.
2. No one who may be biased due to themselves or family members having committed or been accused of sexual violence or misconduct.
3. The group should include someone who is a professional in the field of sexual violence from outside the congregation.
4. The group should also include a survivor of sexual abuse.

The accountability team shall be made up of 1 member of Safe Sanctuary Committee, 1 deacon, and 2 members at large. The accused may suggest one person from LAMC to be on the accountability team. At least 50% of the team shall be of the same gender as the offender.

B) The perpetrator/accused shall establish, together with this accountability group, an Expectations Statement for their ongoing participation in church activities. Expectations may include such parameters as which doors this person

may use in entering/exiting the church building, rooms this person may use, and whether they are to be accompanied by an “accountability companion” while participating in church-related activities. They may be asked by the group to maintain a time of separation from the congregation following the incident of abuse or following any lapse in the agreement or further indication of behaviors which cause fear or safety concerns for members of the congregation. Involvement of an outside agency is strongly encouraged in making these judgments.

C) The victim/survivor will be given the opportunity to participate in a process of mediation or reconciliation with the offender if they so choose.

D) Refusal to participate in the protocol of accountability or failure to meet the guidelines outlined in the Expectations Statement will result in suspension by the Board of Deacons, the Staff Relations Committee, the Safe Sanctuary Committee or the Accountability Group from all participation in LAMC activities and programs. The Suspension Letter will indicate the length of time of the suspension and procedures for potentially returning to congregational life.

Section VIII--Statement Regarding Care for Those Who Have Been Abused

LAMC is being challenged to become a survivor friendly congregation. In order for victims/survivors to do this, the church needs to feel like a safe, supportive place. Actions we can take as a congregation are:

1. Have regular trainings for the entire congregation on issues concerning sexual violence.
2. Support agencies and list these on our website (under missions we support), that deal with child abuse and/or sexual violence.
3. Have services (at least once a year) that focus on abuse issues.
4. Have resources displayed in church to help survivors.
5. Start a survivor’s support group.
6. Post quarterly Safe Sanctuary statements or articles in Messenger.

Section IX—Administration of this Policy

1) A Safe Sanctuary Committee shall be appointed by Church Council and authorized to administer the specific procedures of this policy, including

- The supervision of operational procedures.
- Coordinating the annual training sessions for volunteers, staff and congregational members and attendees.

- Conducting periodic background checks.
- Educating the broader congregation regarding issues related to the policy.
- Contacting references.
- Maintaining records.
- Periodic policy reviews and updates with reviews occurring at a minimum of every three years.

2) In pertaining to recruitment of volunteers Safe Sanctuary Committee shall communicate and work in conjunction with other boards and committees as appropriate, especially

- Board of Christian Education
- Board of Deacons
- Nursery Committee
- Congregational Chair
- Church Council Chair
- Pastors

3) For adult and staff concerns Safe Sanctuary Committee shall communicate with

- Board of Christian Education
- Board of Deacons and
- Staff Relations Committee
- Congregational Chair
- Church Council Chair
- Pastors

4) When situations arise that are not clearly outlined in this policy a process that follows the spirit of this policy with

- the Safe Sanctuary Committee,
- the Board of Deacons,
- Staff Relations Chair,

- the Congregational Chair or
- Church Council Chair

Any of these persons or committees is authorized to initiate the process.

5) Monthly Schedule of tasks

Meetings are held every 2-4 months.

January:

- Finalize new board members for the upcoming year

February

- Select chair and secretary for upcoming year
- Attend February's Congregational meeting
- Present new board appointments will be approved

March

- Orient new member(s) to the committee
- Select Chair and Secretary for upcoming year
 - Insure that the yearly directory update includes current members and chair
- Chair create and distribute upcoming meetings and agenda
- Attend Council Retreat

April

- Review Safe Sanctuary Policies and Procedures
- Identify areas needing updated and gaps in the policies
 - Add representatives appointed from
 - Board of Deacons.
 - Board of Christian Education
 - Staff Relations Committee
 - Explore training options for September
- Confirm date(s) with Board of Christian Education

June

- Finalized training options
- Present training to church council providing information on the program and cost to request payment
 - Receive list of teachers and subs for the fall
 - Do background checks on new teachers and subs (two months prior to starting to ensure background checks are completed in time)

- Prepare an article for the August messenger about upcoming training or abuse/neglect (optional)

September

- Oversee training
- Encourage all to attend, required for those working with children in the church
- Be present for any concerns or feedback

November

- Check in with committee members whose terms will expire to see if they want to continue
- Receive list of church members to contact to serve a 3-year term on Safe Sanctuary Committee
- Begin to contact member(s) to join next year's committee

December

- Annual report
- Receive list of new teachers, nursery, and subs for the spring
- Conduct background tasks

Section X—Governing Authority of this Policy

The administration of this policy is the ultimate responsibility of the Church Council or its designees. The Church Council shall approve revisions or clarifications of this policy recommended by the Safe Sanctuary Committee. The congregation will be provided with revised copies of the Safe Sanctuary Policy.

Section XI --- Responses to this document

Any questions or concerns related to this document or suggestions for revision may be directed to:

- Safe Sanctuary Committee Chair,
- Board of Deacons Chair,
- Staff Relations Chair,
- Congregational Chair or
- Church Council Chair

Those names are included in the annually revised *Church Directory*

Appendix A:

Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church Safe Sanctuary Incident Report Form

Date incident occurred: _____ Time: _____

Date/time incident reported to:

911 (called if immediate danger is present): _____

DCF: _____ Law enforcement: _____ The church: _____

Incident reported by (name/phone number): _____

Other witness(es): _____

Type(s) of abuse (See LAMC Safe Sanctuary Policy for definitions):

Physical Sexual Emotional Neglect

Name of person abused: _____ Date of birth: _____

Parent(s) or legal guardian if minor: _____

Address of abused: _____

Address of parent/guardian (if different): _____

Nature and extent of abuse/injury: _____

Evidence of previous abuse/injury: _____

Nature of medical attention required: _____

Name of person accused: _____

Address of person accused: _____

Phone number of person accused: _____

Describe incident in detail (use additional paper if required): _____

Report received by Name/Position/Signature _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Report written by: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Reporter/Signature/Witness if Present _____

Return to: Safe Sanctuary Chair or Deacons Chair or Staff Relations Chair. Or call Kansas Hot Line to Report Abuse and Neglect (1-800-922-5330)

Appendix B: Tips to Remember

Tips to remember while acting on suspicions or report of abuse

1. Stay calm and listen to the child/person.
2. Take the child's word seriously and keep any physical evidence.
3. Do not ask leading questions or probe for more details. It is appropriate to say, "Tell me more," or ask other open-ended questions. IF a forensic investigation is done, the less said or asked by the adult the better it is for the investigation.
4. Give emotional support, reminding the individual that they *are* not at fault and that they are courageous and right to tell you about the problem.
5. Assure the individual that you will do everything you can to make the abuse stop. Explain that in order to help, you must tell some other people.

Positive Classroom Management

Developed by Katherine Burkey Wiens

1. Greet children with a smile when they come into the classroom each Sunday morning or Wednesday night. Let them know you are glad they are in church!
2. Clearly state your expectations. Don't assume that children know what is expected of them.
3. Model for children the behaviors you want them to have.
4. Treat children in polite and respectful ways.
5. Focus on positive behaviors. Acknowledge what the children are doing well.
6. Remember discipline is meant to teach. How are you teaching children to behave positively?
7. Give choices whenever possible.
8. Understand who the child is and where they come from. What kind of personality does the child have? What is their home situation like? What are their individual special needs? Better understanding of each child and their unique life situations will help you better understand their behaviors.
9. Remember that building relationships with other children and adults, as well as feeling part of a community, is just as important to a child's spiritual growth as learning Bible stories and verses.
10. Take care of yourself! You will be better able to give to the children if your needs are met.
11. Understand your own triggers. These are behaviors a child displays that may especially frustrate you. When you understand how your "buttons" may be pushed, you can then think about how you can manage these in positive ways with the child.

Appendix C (continued)

Responding to Disruptions:

source: Disciples Home Missions

1. Treat the disruptive behavior in a respectful, quiet, and calm manner.
2. Remind all of the children what is expected. At this point, do not single out any particular child or children.
3. If a particular child continues to disrupt the group, give ~~her~~them some choices, such as sitting near the door (where they can still see and hear but will not be able to continue disturbing other children), taking a few minutes with the other adult present in the classroom, or being taken to her parents.
4. Stay away from an attitude of punishment. Talk about how sometimes, we all have difficult days or need help focusing. Use words that promote understanding among the group, not punishment.
5. Remove a child from the group only as a last resort. If a child does have to be removed from the group, make sure that he and his parents know that you want him to come back to the next class.
6. As leaders of children's classes/programs, there may be days when we will not get to our "plan" for the day as a result of dealing with disruptive behaviors (or other pressing needs of a child/children). This is okay! The important work of building community and caring for each other will be taking place.

Remember that there is no magic formula for handling conflicts with children, whatever the situation. No matter how much support we receive or how well prepared we are, problems can still arise. However, if we feel surrounded by a loving community which has made children's ministry a priority, and if we are prayerfully prepared, even conflicts can be an opportunity to deepen our ministry to children. Thinking ahead, giving adequate attention to community building, and establishing relationships with parents will help us in our efforts to respond in positive, loving ways to the children in our care. Please feel free to talk to a member of the Nurture Commission for further support and/or suggestions.

Katherine Burkey Wiens M.Ed. LPC

Newton, KS

Appendix D

Mentoring the "Safe Sanctuaries" Way

Congregational mentoring programs are designed to nurture a spiritual friendship - one youth to one adult. How does the mentoring relationship fit with some of the procedures that Safe Sanctuaries suggest? The "rule" that two adults be present at every event where there is youth or children's ministry may frustrate mentors as they plan times with their mentee. Also in question may be conversations / counseling within the mentor / mentee relationship conducted in isolation. At first glance, it may seem that the mentoring ministry of a congregation is not appropriate, because often the mentor pair is alone. yet we would all agree that healthy intimacy, spiritual conversations and trust is a big part of youth ministry and about nurturing faith between youth and adults.

Here are some ideas that will reduce the risk of both accusations and abuse:

- 1. Host Mentor / Mentee gatherings in groups.** All mentor pairs are invited to a time at the church or some other public setting where they will engage together in group activities. While there, they could break into pairs and discuss, pray, etc.
- 2. Keep parents in the loop when you are with your mentee.** Make sure the parents are informed about pick up and drop off time, where you will be going and how you will get there. If you are running late on the way home - you or the youth should phone. *Don't go by the phrase "better to ask forgiveness than permission" with regards to informing parents.*
- 3. Be at "public places" with your mentee.** Avoid places where you are isolated. Overnights with just the two of you are off limits. Public places would be concerts, sporting events; shopping, parks in daylight.
- 4. If your mentee comes to your home, another adult should be present** - a spouse, friend. Keep your conversations and activities in full view of other family members, do not sequester yourself in a family room and close the door.
- 5. Mentors, just like youth pastors and youth sponsors should undergo training on appropriate language, boundaries and touch issues.** Those educated on these issues understand the risk factors and will make better decisions about what is appropriate.
- 6. Consider your own motivation for being a mentor.** Make sure you have their best interests in mind and design your time together for healthy interaction.

Remember, Safe Sanctuaries is not trying to sabotage or shut down any effective ministry. The goal is to keep relationships healthy; encourage appropriate boundary management; protect church workers from accusations; protect the children and youth from possible misconduct and abuse and after all

Marlene Bogard, Minister of Christian Nurture, Western District Conference of Mennonite Church USA

Appendix E

Prevention and Response: Sexual Abuse and Non-Credentialed Individuals

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This resource is not a legal document, and the guidelines it contains are not meant to replace the legal process. This resource is a starting point to help guide leaders in our Mennonite Christian communities to prevent and respond appropriately to sexual abuse. All who utilize this resource must carefully review recommendations and discuss how they will execute them in their context. We always recommend consultation with local sexual abuse centers, legal counsel and victim advocacy organizations.

To view full content go to: <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Sexual-Abuse-PAR-Booklet-digital.pdf>

Also located in Office SharePoint:

[https://lorraineavenuememno.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/lorraineshared/Shared%20Documents/Policies%20and%20procedures/2.%20App%20E-MC%20USA%20..%20PRINT%20with%20SS%20Policy\(1\).pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=XCsaqM](https://lorraineavenuememno.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/lorraineshared/Shared%20Documents/Policies%20and%20procedures/2.%20App%20E-MC%20USA%20..%20PRINT%20with%20SS%20Policy(1).pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=XCsaqM)

Appendix F

Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church
655 Lorraine St, Wichita, KS 67211, 316-682-4555
**Consent Form: Posting Pictures/Videos of Minors &
Electronic Communication with Minors**

Name of Participant: _____

Address: _____

City, State and Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____

Parent/Guardian Cell Phone: _____

Parent / Guardian Email: _____

By providing the email address and cell phone number of a minor, the parent/guardian grants permission for electronic communication from the approved adult leaders to this minor in regards to all group related activities.

Participant's Email: _____

Participant's Cell Phone: _____

Sharing of a minor's contact information: (If the following statement is not checked, the information will not be shared.)

_____ I give my permission for my child's email and cell phone number to be shared with other minors and adult leaders who are associated with the activity of this parish organization.

In order to protect the privacy of youth, permission must also be obtained, in writing, from the parent or guardian before sharing/posting pictures or videos of minors. (Please check the one which applies)

_____ I give my permission for my child's picture, without name, to be posted on a website or social network page associated with this congregation.

_____ I wish to review each image prior to it being posted.

_____ I do not wish to review each image prior to it being posted.

_____ I do not give permission for my child's picture to be posted on a website on a website or social network page.

This consent is applicable from date of signature until August of the following year 2021.

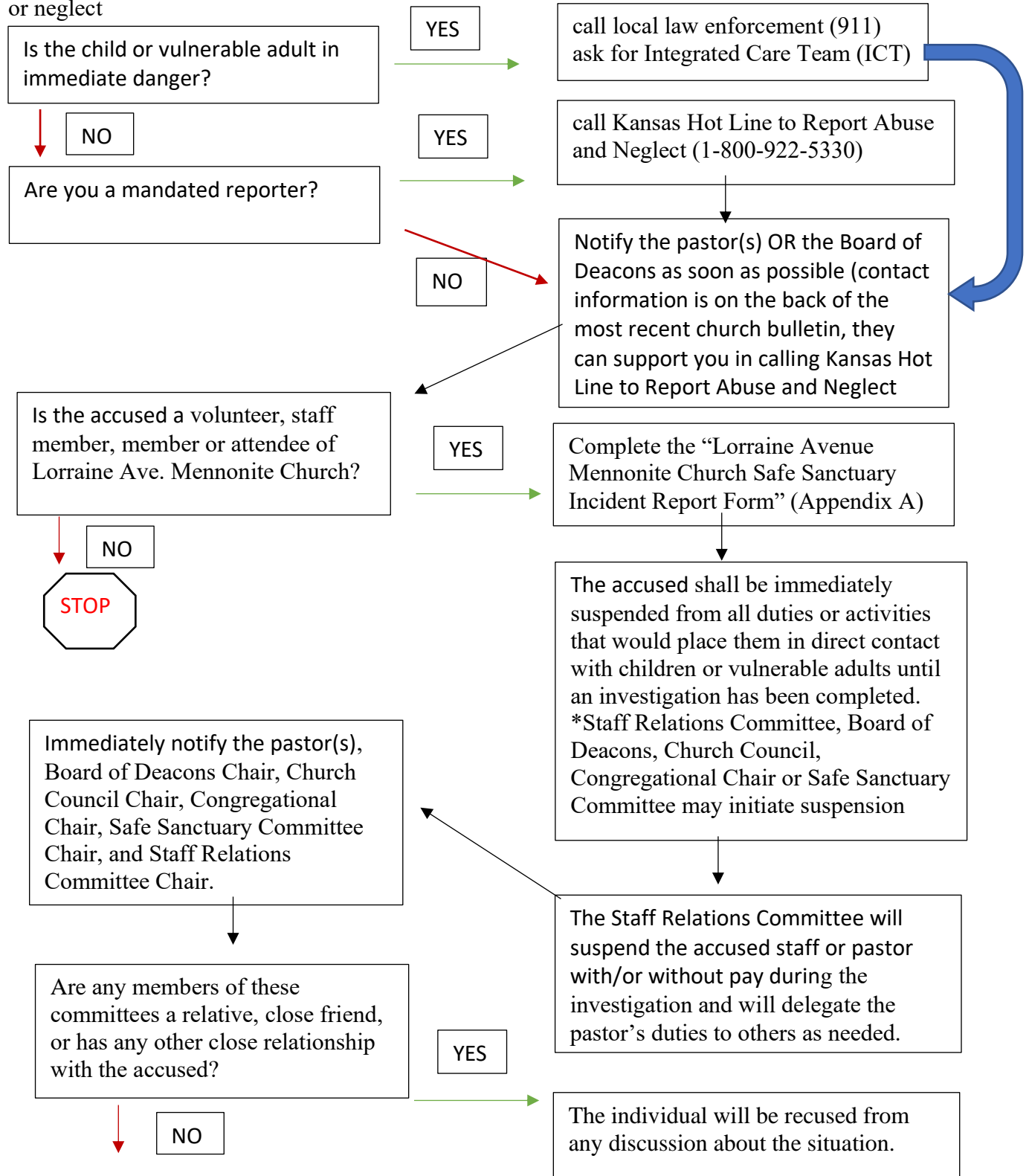
Each academic year requires a new consent to be signed.

Name of Parent/Guardian – please print Date

Signature of Parent/Guardian


Signature of child/youth

Appendix G: Flow chart for **Reporting and Response to an Incident** actual or suspected abuse or neglect



Continued on next page

Responding to an incident of reported abuse



<p>Identify and authorized one person to speak to the media on behalf of LAMC. Options include pastor, Congregation Chair, Church Council, Board of Deacons, or another person designated upon joint agreement of the above persons.</p>	<p>Consult with other agencies including but not limited to: Western District Conference, GRACE (Godly Response to Abuse in Christian Environments), Into Account/Our Stories UnTold, Faith Trust Institute, the MAP (Mennonite Abuse Prevention), Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center, Dove's Nest.</p>	<p>Within one week of the report the congregation will be notified by the Congregational Chair, the Church Council Chair, or the Board of Deacons Chair. Notification will include name of person suspended.</p>
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Each situation will be handled individually and confidentially. This policy shall serve as a guideline for any action taken. The safety of persons at LAMC overrides the offender's right to confidentiality.