

**The Brick Presbyterian Church
62 East 92nd Street
New York, New York 10128**

Title: Safe Sanctuary Policy
4
Revised: May 14, 2018
2008

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Supersedes: June 11,

Originally adopted by Session May 21, 2008

Statement of Purpose:

The Brick Presbyterian Church has established the Safe Sanctuary Policy to demonstrate our absolute and unwavering commitment to the safety of all children and youth participating in the Brick Presbyterian Church programs.

Aims:

- To maintain a safe environment in which children and youth are protected from Inappropriate Treatment of any kind.
- To protect staff, volunteers, and The Brick Presbyterian Church from potential allegation of abuse and maltreatment.
- To educate staff, volunteers, and paid caregivers concerning the above matters.

Definitions:

- I. “Adult” refers to any person who is at least 18 years of age.
- II. “Child” refers to any person who is under 18 years of age.
- III. “Church” refers to The Brick Presbyterian Church, New York, New York.
- IV. “Inappropriate Treatment” refers to abuse or maltreatment that is physical, emotional, and/or sexual.
- V. “Parent” refers to the parent, guardian, or designee of the parent or guardian (as indicated on a written form) of a Child.
- VI. “Policy” refers to the policy set forth in this document, which applies to all Sunday Church School and Church-sponsored youth programs. It does not apply to the Brick Church Day School or programs held at the Church which are not directly governed by Session, such as troop meetings of the Boy Scouts of America or Girl Scouts of America.
- VII. “Volunteer” refers to a screened and trained Adult member of the Church.

Policy:

- I. Adult Supervision
 - A. The Two Adult Rule: During any Church-sponsored program, event, activity, or ministry involving a Child, there shall be present at all times at least two Adults who do

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not live

together and who are unrelated by blood or marriage. In addition, for overnight activities there shall be present at all times at least one Adult of each gender. The exception to this policy would be in a situation where an Adult and Child are in a public place or other

persons are in and out of the area. In such cases, doors shall remain open. The following, however, do not violate this policy:

1. During Sunday Church School mornings, a designated Adult supervisor moves in and out of classrooms and monitors hallways;
 2. One-on-one interactions between a Child and Adult conducted in a public space with a Church staff member's prior knowledge, and the Child's Parent's prior consent;
 3. An emergency or other situation (for example, bathroom breaks, calming a distraught Child, or helping a sick Child) requiring one Adult to be alone with a Child, and another Adult is notified immediately before and after that time period;
 4. Only a Child's Parent or paid caregiver shall change the Child's diaper.
- B. The Open Door Policy: The door to a room occupied by a Child shall be left open unless the door has a window in it. The doors of bathrooms used for a Child requiring Adult supervision shall remain open.
- C. Counseling Policy: At any counseling session with a Child, an Adult shall abide by the Open Door Policy or the Two Adult Rule, unless a Parent has authorized in writing a closed-door meeting or an individual meeting.
- D. Release of a Child: After a Church-sponsored event, a Child in 7th grade or younger shall be released only to a Parent unless parental consent has been given. Sign-in sheets are necessary up to and including a Child in kindergarten.
- E. Transportation: Off-site transportation for Church trips require written permission by the Parent.
- F. Reporting Abuse/Maltreatment: An Adult who witnesses Inappropriate Treatment of a Child shall report said Inappropriate Treatment according to Section IV of the Policy.

II. Screening and Training of Volunteers

- A. The Church shall provided a copy of the Policy and shall conduct periodic training for

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Volunteers.

- B. There must be a five year age difference between a Volunteer and a Child with whom he or she is working.
- C. Persons who are under 18 years of age shall only assist with children and must be supervised by two unrelated adults.
- D. A member Parent of an enrolled Child and non-members who have been active and regular participants of the Church for at least six (6) months may assist with a Child.
- E. Volunteers with ongoing, direct contact with a Child are required to provide an

authorization and release authorizing the conduct of a confidential criminal record background check.

- 1. A designated Church staff member shall be responsible for processing the criminal record/background checks and checking the national sex offender databases.
- 2. Adults who have been convicted of any criminal offense involving the mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of a Child are forbidden from working or volunteering in any Church-sponsored program, event, activity, or ministry.

III. Photography, Social Media, and Texting

- A. The Church will adhere to its policy regarding the Church website and communications policy regarding a Child photo or video.
- B. An Adult should only take a photo or video of a Child at Church events to be used for internal Church publications and advertisement of events.
- C. Photographing or taking videos of a Child at Church events for the purpose of sharing on social media or the Church website is not permitted unless Parent permission is obtained by the Children or Youth Minister.
- D. An Adult shall not initiate a friend or follow request with a Child on any social media platform. If a Child sends an Adult a friend or follow request, the Adult should discern the level of contact they wish to maintain with a Child prior to responding to the request.
- E. Adults who are connected to a Child on social media must agree to refrain from posting inappropriate content.
- F. Emailing and/or texting with a Child about anything beyond matters related to the church should be avoided and should be brought to the attention of the Children Minister or Youth Minister immediately.

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IV. Reporting Abuse or Maltreatment

- A. An Adult who suspects, believes, or witnesses the Inappropriate Treatment of a Child shall report the incident to the Church pastoral staff member who is responsible for the program or activity. If there is reasonable cause to suspect that abuse, neglect, or maltreatment has occurred, the Adult or pastoral staff member may, and any “Mandated Reporter” must, contact the New York Statewide Central Register (“SCR”) of Child Abuse and Maltreatment. The SCR telephone numbers are:
**(800) 342-3720 for clergy and volunteer teachers; and
(800) 635-1522 for a “Mandated Reporters” which include, but is not limited to, any school teacher, school administrator, or other school personnel member or employee, required to hold a teaching or administrative license or certificate, acting in his or her professional capacity.**
- B. Once the SCR has been contacted, if required by law or by voluntary contact, as applicable, the Director of Administration and Finance shall notify the Church’s insurance carrier.
- C. The Child’s Parent shall be notified immediately of the alleged Inappropriate Treatment.
- D. The person accused of the Inappropriate Treatment shall be removed from any position involving contact with a Child until the completion of the formal investigation. All details of the investigation will remain confidential until a conclusion is reached. All investigations will afford reasonable due process as determined by the Session.
- E. In the event of a conflict between this policy and the liability insurance policy of the Church, the liability insurance policy shall govern.