



Newberg
Friends
Church

Child Safety Policy

I. Background Principles

Ministry with, to and for children is a sacred trust. That's why it matters that Newberg Friends be a place that safeguards the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of children in its care.

Newberg Friends is committed to provide

- protective supervision and care for all children,
- guidance and protection for workers,
- protection for its ministries,
- information and instruction regarding policies and procedures relating to the protection of children and the prevention of abuse.

II. Definitions

Abuse: any recent act or failure to act that results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation; or an act or failure to act that presents an imminent risk or serious harm.

- **Emotional Abuse** – threats, critical words, demeaning terms or names, and other actions that convey a message that the child is undeserving of love and care.
- **Sexual Abuse** – sexual contact between a child and an adult (or an older, more powerful youth).
- **Physical Abuse** – intentional, deliberate behavior that causes bodily harm.
- **Neglect** – leaving a child without proper care and control necessary for well-being.

Child: An unmarried person under the age of eighteen (18).

Worker: A person paid by the church to perform a specific function; a person who performs work without pay (volunteer); a person appointed to fill an office in the church.

Two-Adult Rule: Applies to situations in which at least two adults must be present.

Rule of Three: Applies to situations in which at least three people must be present, keeping a child from being left alone with an adult.

III. Specific Policies

Screening: All workers who minister to and/or work with children must complete an application form and undergo a criminal background check, both of which will be kept confidential. Criminal background checks will be conducted at least once every two (2) years. Access to these records will be restricted to

- the lead pastor or appointed designee,
- the presiding clerk of the meeting,
- the clerk of the elders,
- and the pastors of youth and children's ministries.

Persons who have a founded report of abuse against another person of any age, have a criminal record that includes any crimes of violence, or are under investigation for a crime are not eligible for work with children. If there is a previous conviction for a crime not including abuse or violence, there must be at least one year between the time of conviction and the application to serve with youth or children. If there are multiple previous convictions, not including abuse or any crime of violence, applicants must be approved by the elders.

All drivers of church vehicles must complete a driver history form and supply a copy of a current driver's license. These forms will be kept on file in the church office.

Reporting: Adults working with children should immediately report to the specific program supervisor any behavior that appears to be abusive or inappropriate. Any suspected abuse must also be reported. The pastors of youth and children's ministries will be responsible for the formal reporting and follow-up of child abuse allegations.

Training: The pastors of youth and children's ministries are responsible for the training and education of all adults working with children at Newberg Friends. Parents are encouraged to talk with their children about what abuse is.

Programming: Children will not be left unsupervised during any church-sponsored event or while waiting for a ride home after any church-sponsored event.

- The **Two-Adult Rule** is mandatory for each vehicle when transporting children on overnight trips and for activities that take children into unpopulated areas (e.g. backpacking, hiking, climbing, rafting, water sports). The **Two-Adult Rule** is the goal for all programming.
- The **Rule of Three** is mandatory for all programming in which the **Two-Adult Rule** is not required, with the following three exceptions:
 - one-on-one meeting with parent permission (e.g. tutoring, counseling, mentoring),
 - transport to or from an event as arranged by the parent and with parent permission,
 - isolation of a child during illness.

Medical Release & Permissions: Children may only take part in church-sponsored, off-site events after turning in a completed medical release and liability waiver each year. These forms will be kept on file in the youth pastor's office and taken along on any church-sponsored trips to off-site events in case of an emergency requiring medical care.