

The Church in Anaheim

Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People

The church in Anaheim recognizes the importance of ministry to *children* and *young people* and the need to safeguard them when entrusted to *the church's* care. Since they can become the victims of neglect or of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, the Board of Directors (Board) of the corporation known as *The Church in Anaheim* has adopted the following policy.

Definitions and Distinctions

For purposes of this document:

- The term *the church in Anaheim* (or *the church*) refers to the Christians meeting on the ground of oneness in the city of Anaheim, California. *The church* is overseen by appointed elders.
- The term *The Church in Anaheim* (or *The Church*) refers to the corporation registered with the State of California for administration of temporal affairs on behalf of *the church*. *The Church in Anaheim* is overseen by a Board of elected Directors.
- *Children* refers to those in the sixth grade and younger unless further qualified.
- *Young people* refers to junior high and high school students.
- *CYP* refers to *children* and *young people* collectively or individually.
- *Parents* refers to the primary caregiver(s) of a *CYP*; *parents* may refer to the natural or adoptive parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and may also be “Serving ones.”
- *Serving ones* refers to employees or volunteers of *The Church* who have passed a background check, signed an employee or volunteer agreement, and been approved by *the church's* elders to serve with *CYP*.
- *Church facilities* refers to the property that *The Church* owns or leases, including the grounds, buildings, and rooms operated or overseen by *The Church*.
- *Church-sponsored CYP-centered activities* are regular or special activities coordinated by the *serving ones* for *CYP*, including child care, children's meetings, young people's meetings, and conferences for *CYP*.
- *Church-related CYP-centered activities* are activities initiated by one or more members of *the church*, including meetings in members' homes, small group meetings, neighborhood children's meetings, and activities where permission is given to use *church facilities*, including outdoor activities.
- During such activities there may be concurrent *church-sponsored CYP-centered activities* or *church-related CYP-centered activities*. In such cases, the respective standards of responsibility for oversight of the *CYP* apply.
- *Shepherding* refers to spiritual and practical care of *CYP*. Spiritual care includes prayer, fellowship, Bible reading, and other activities aimed to foster spiritual growth. Practical care includes eating meals together, providing help with homework, providing transportation, and having outdoor recreation, etc.

- *Individual shepherding* refers to arrangements approved by *parents* for the care of their *child* or *young person*, whether or not *serving ones* are involved.

Objectives

The Church in Anaheim is committed to:

- Providing a safe environment for *CYP*;
- Providing for the spiritual education of *CYP* in an atmosphere where they can experience Christian fellowship and companionship appropriate to their age and maturity;
- Valuing, listening to, and respecting all *CYP* as well as promoting their welfare and protection;
- Shepherding *CYP* with the divine life to have proper spiritual life practices and in the humanity of Jesus to have a proper human living, including recreation and social grouping;
- Providing an environment in which *serving ones* can serve our *CYP* without fear of unwarranted claims of abuse;
- Screening, training, and monitoring the service of all who serve with *CYP* in activities sponsored by *the church in Anaheim*—all *serving ones* must undergo the 2 hour mandated training provided by the state of California and any other trainings required by the church in Anaheim;
- Promptly addressing all reports of suspected abuse or neglect; and
- Reporting as appropriate to civil authorities and complying with all legal guidelines.

General Statement of Policy

The *Church* has safeguards for *CYP* participating in *church-sponsored CYP-centered activities*. Other events or gatherings where *CYP* may be present fall outside *The Church's* responsibility and ability to provide direct oversight. These include but are not limited to small or large gatherings in members' homes, parks, *church facilities* used by permission, and other informal settings where members may meet for mutual care, meals, recreational activities, prayer, and fellowship. Furthermore, *CYP* may participate in *church-sponsored activities* or *church-related activities* that are not *church-sponsored CYP-centered activities*, and thus are not overseen by *The Church* or *serving ones*. Therefore, in all settings other than *church-sponsored CYP-centered activities*, the responsibility to safeguard the welfare of *CYP* rests directly with their *parents* and not with *The Church*.

Oversight

The Board will designate a minimum of two members of *the church* to serve as *CYP protection compliance monitors* (or *compliance monitors*). The elders of *the church* will be responsible for establishing procedures for screening of *serving ones* and volunteers, training, and all record keeping related to the implementation of this policy. The *compliance monitors* will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of this policy.

Standards for Serving Ones

1. All adults who desire to serve with *CYP* or who will have regular contact with *CYP* in *church-sponsored CYP-centered activities* must:
 - a. complete an Employment or Volunteer Application;
 - b. provide at least two references of non-family members;

- c. be background check screened using the live scan fingerprint third-party service required by the state of California ;
- d. read and sign an acknowledgment verifying that you had read and will comply with this child protection policy ; and
- e. be approved to serve with *CYP* by the elders of *the church in Anaheim*.

These requirements apply to everyone, including directors and officers of *The Church*, even if the applicant is known to the elders in *the church* or to those *serving ones* in leadership roles in *CYP* service.

2. No unmarried male over the age of 30 shall serve with *children*.
3. No unmarried male over the age of 35 shall serve with *young people*.
4. *Young people* may join at least two *serving ones* in the *children's* service, not to bear responsibility for that service, but as a learner, upon submission of an Adolescent Service Participation Agreement by the *young person's parents* and approval by at least two elders of *the church*.

Standards for Church-sponsored CYP-centered Activities

1. All *church-sponsored CYP-centered* activities will be supervised by two *serving ones*, at least one of whom must be at least 25 years of age.
2. Each room for groups of thirty or fewer *CYP* must have an unobstructed view from the outside of the room.
3. *Parents* will be permitted and encouraged to participate, visit and observe all *church-related CYP-centered activities* at any time, provided they do not disrupt those activities.
4. *Non-parents* who are not serving with the *CYP* will not be permitted where *church-related CYP-centered activities*, except for special purposes with the express permission of the *serving ones* overseeing the service for that age group and at least one elder.
5. No *serving one* shall use any form of corporal punishment on any *CYP* at any time. If physical restraint is required to avoid self-harm, harm to another, or harm to property, the *parents* (or if unavailable an emergency contact) must be contacted to pick up the *CYP* as soon as possible. The *serving ones* who are present must report the incident to a *compliance monitor* and the *parents*.
6. No *CYP* should leave an activity alone or be left outside the area of supervision of the *serving ones*.
7. Following *church-sponsored CYP-centered events*, at least two *serving ones* (at least one of whom must be at least 25 years of age) must remain until the last *CYP* leaves. Twenty minutes following the conclusion of said activity, the *CYP* may be left with one adult 25 years of age or older. If weather permits, both the *CYP* and the supervising adult will wait outside in public view for transportation to arrive.
8. The *serving ones* must obtain written permission signed by at least two elders before holding *church-sponsored CYP-centered activities* in the home of church members apart from a regular home meeting. If a home will host such activities more than once every two months, the church members should take the necessary steps to become a volunteer *serving one*.

Sign-in/Sign-out Procedure for Children

1. At all *church-sponsored CYP-centered activities* at which *parents* leave elementary and pre-elementary school children under the supervision of *serving ones*, those children must be signed in by a *parent* or a *parent's* designee. Only the *parent* or their designee who signed the child in may sign him or her out unless the *serving one* releasing the child is able to contact and obtain permission from the *parent* or the designee who signed in the child. The only exception shall be permitted in cases of emergency, as covered below.

2. Prior to a *parent* signing in their child, a Parental Consent and Waiver Agreement must be filled out by a *parent* and provided to the *compliance monitors*. At the same time, a copy of this policy must be made available to the *parent*. A list of emergency contacts must be readily accessible to the *serving ones* for the *children* they supervise while *children* are present.

General Safety for Children

1. No *child* should be allowed at any time in maintenance or mechanical rooms, that is, rooms with dangerous chemicals or electrical equipment, even if they are accompanied by a *serving one*.

2. No *child* should ever be out of sight of the *serving ones*, except as described below.

3. No *child* should leave the premises with anyone, including *serving ones*, other than the person authorized to sign that person out, except in cases of medical emergency, in which cases *parents* should be notified immediately of the medical facility to which the *child* is being taken.

Restroom Use and Supervision

1. At any *church-sponsored* or *church-related activities* using *church facilities*, restrooms shall only be entered as designated for male or females according to an individual's biological gender.

2. Supervision of restroom activities for *children* varies by age and need. Toddlers who are not toilet-trained should be cared for in their meeting room or its immediate vicinity. Pre-K toilet-trained children should not be left without the supervision of an adult at any time but should be within sight of a *serving one* while still respecting the child's privacy.

3. Those supervising restroom activity should avoid being alone with a *child* in a closed restroom.

4. Kindergarten through second grade should be escorted to the restroom by a *serving one* but restroom activities themselves should be self-managed. Depending on the layout of the facility, third through sixth graders may or may not be escorted depending on whether or not the pathway to the restroom is secure. In all cases, the *serving ones* enter the restrooms only for their own biological gender.

5. Any accommodation needed for a *CYP* with a physical or mental disability should be discussed in advance with the *parents*.

Church-related CYP-centered Activities

Except during *church-sponsored CYP-centered activities*, ensuring proper supervision of *CYP* is the sole responsibility of the *parents* of the *CYP* involved.

Church-Related CYP-centered Activities in Homes

The Church recommends that *church-related CYP-centered activities* held in a church member's home be supervised by at least two adults who are not members of the same family.

Shepherding Activities

1. *Shepherding* activities are not considered *church-sponsored activities*, even if they take place during *church-sponsored activities*.
2. Any *individual shepherding* session with *CYP* should take place in a location with unobstructed visibility. This may be a public location approved by a *parent* or a room in a *church facility* with other occupants in the general proximity. In the latter case, the door to the room should remain open for the entire session, unless there is a window in the door or wall which gives a clear view into the entire room.
3. If *parents* and *serving ones* enter into a private agreement in which the *parent* authorizes a specific *individual shepherding* activity for a *CYP*, the *serving one* is acting outside the scope of his or her agreements with *The Church*. The *serving one* is thus not entitled to the legal protections otherwise afforded by *The Church*.
4. *Serving ones* who do not follow these recommendations are subject to restriction or removal from service.

Transportation to/from Sponsored Events

1. Although *serving ones* may at times assist in the arrangement of transportation to and/or from *church-sponsored activities*, the responsibility to ensure appropriate transportation arrangements lies solely with the *CYP's parents*. Transportation to and from *church-sponsored CYP-centered activities* does not constitute a *church-sponsored activity*.
2. *The Church* recommends that *serving ones*, before providing transportation to *CYP*, obtain a signed Parental Consent and Waiver Agreement that designates the *parents* as having direct responsibility for their *CYP's* safety and approves the *serving one* as a voluntary driver. The transportation of *CYP* under a private agreement between a *serving one* and *parent* is not sponsored or recommended by *The Church* and the *parents* and the *serving one* do so at their own risk.
3. If a vehicle owned or leased by *The Church* is to be used for transporting *CYP*, the voluntary driver must be a *serving one* who is at least twenty-five (25) years of age and have a valid driver's license and two *serving ones* shall be in the vehicle while it is in use.
4. *Serving ones* who transport *CYP*, regardless of the ownership of the vehicle used, may only interact with hands free electronic devices while the vehicle is in operation. Should an electronic device be used for navigation, it should be programmed before commencing and not interacted with while the vehicle is being driven. Failure to abide by this standard may result in restriction or removal from service.

Lodging for Overnight Trips

For any overnight trips in which *serving ones* stay with *CYP* who are in families other than their own there should be either:

- Two *serving ones* in a room with *CYP*; or

- At least three young people with a *servant one*.

In no case should the rooms be locked, that is, inaccessible to others for appropriate monitoring.

Reporting

Any person who observes something that may not be in compliance with this policy, or who has any concerns about the treatment of *CYP*, must promptly report the conduct to the *compliance monitors* and/or to the directors and elders so that an investigation can be made and remedial action taken, if appropriate.

California law also requires that certain categories of people called “mandated reporters” must report “reasonable suspicion” of child abuse or neglect to certain state agencies or local law enforcement. Some of the categories of conduct which must be reported include but are not limited to physical abuse, sexual abuse, willful cruelty or unjustified punishment, unlawful corporal punishment or injury, and neglect. “Mandated reporters” include Church employees and ministerial volunteers, but may not include service volunteers. Because of these legal requirements and the potential for criminal prosecution for failure to report, any person working with or observing *CYP* must immediately report any “reasonable suspicion” of child abuse or neglect, as set forth above, to the elders of *the church* and to the directors of *The Church*. Exceptions may be made for “penitential communication.” As the definition of what constitutes a penitential communication is subject to change, “mandate reporters” should consult current law or seek legal advice before applying that exception.