



Mountain View Mennonite Chapel Child Protection Policy

The disturbing and traumatic rise of physical and sexual abuse of children has claimed the attention of our nation and society. Physical abuse is injury or death inflicted other than by accidental means. Sexual abuse is any act of a sexual nature upon or with a child. The act may be for the gratification of the perpetrator or of a 3rd party or for the exploitation of a child. The purpose of our Child Protection Policy is to help provide a safe and secure environment for children and youth to encounter the love of God and to grow in Him through the various programs and activities that are offered.

Mountain View Mennonite Chapel will be referred to as MVMC throughout this document.

Screening Procedures

- Prior to consideration, all candidates seeking a volunteer position that involves working with children, youth, or disabled adults will complete and return a Children's Ministry Screening Form (see attached).
- The ministry leader, or designee, will carefully review the form, ensuring that the candidate is an appropriate match for the ministry position. The ministry leader, or designee, will also store all application materials in a locked file cabinet or other secure location.
- If the individual appears to be an appropriate candidate for the ministry position, the ministry leader, or designee, will conduct a criminal background check through the Pennsylvania State Police, Pennsylvania ChildLine (child abuse history clearance) and the FBI (if an individual has not been a resident of Pennsylvania continuously, for the last 10 years).
- When indicated by the background checks, volunteer candidates who pose a threat to others, or have a prior history of physical or sexual abuse directed against another person, will be removed immediately from consideration for any church sponsored activity or program for children or youth.
- The same procedures required for volunteer workers also apply to all potential employees, regardless of the ministry position for which they are being considered.

Work Restrictions

- For children age 6 or older, at least one adult female should take girls to the restroom, and one adult male should take boys to the restroom. The adult should check to make sure the facility is safe and then wait outside the restroom for the children. The presence of a second adult escort is also recommended.
- Children age 5 or younger (boys and girls) should be assisted as needed in the restroom by an adult female.
- Children under the age of 18 are never permitted to assist younger children in the restroom.
- Children under the age of 18 may assist in Children's Ministries, but must always be under direct supervision of an adult with approved clearances.

Discipline

- Workers are never to spank, hit, grab, shake, or otherwise physically discipline anyone. Physical restraint should only be used in a situation where it is reasonably necessary to prevent an individual from physically harming himself or another individual.
- Disciplinary problems should be reported to the ministry activity coordinator or supervisor or to a parent or guardian.

Injuries or Illness

- Persons who are ill (with a fever or a communicable disease that can be transmitted by cough or by touch) will not be permitted to participate in any ministry activity.
- A suitable worker—one who has been previously approved through our ministry screening process—must be used to take the place of a worker who is ill.
- Participants should be returned to their parent or guardian as soon as illness is discovered. If immediate return is not possible, then the person who is ill should be isolated in a manner that allows an adult worker to monitor the participant until he/she can be returned to a parent or guardian.
- Persons who have received an injury that is obviously minor should be given first aid as needed at the time of injury. The individual's parents or guardians should be notified of the injury when they pick up the injured person.
- Any injury that may require medical treatment beyond simple first aid should be given immediate attention. The parents or guardians of the injured person should be notified immediately, along with the ministry worker's coordinator or supervisor. If warranted by the injury, emergency medical personnel should be called.

Notice of Injury, Abuse or Molestation

- Volunteer or paid ministry workers who become aware of any injury, abuse, or molestation occurring within any ministry activity must immediately make a direct report of suspected child abuse to ChildLine either electronically at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis or by calling the hotline at 1-800-932-0313. After making the report, the individual is required to immediately notify their activity coordinator, supervisor or ministry leader.
- Ministry leaders who become aware of possible abuse or molestation of a participant must ensure that the participant's parent or guardian is immediately informed that possible abuse or molestation has occurred. The ministry leader also will ensure that an attorney is immediately contacted to provide a written opinion as to whether the organization should report the abuse or molestation to law enforcement authorities. The written opinion should be obtained within 24 hours after the ministry leader first becomes aware of the situation. The attorney's advice should be acted upon immediately, including reporting the incident to the authorities. An attorney also should be contacted immediately if the ministry leader or activity monitor becomes aware of possible abuse or molestation of a participant by a parent or guardian.
- Ministry leaders must promptly notify our ministry's insurance carrier, Brotherhood Mutual, upon notice of abuse or molestation.

Internal Investigation

- MVMC considers any allegation of abuse or molestation a serious matter. Each situation will be fully investigated by ministry leaders.
- Employees who are the subject of an investigation will be removed from their position, with pay, pending completion of the investigation. Employees who admit to the abuse or molestation will be terminated consistent with the established employment practices of this ministry.
- Volunteer subjects of any investigation will be removed from their positions pending completion of the investigation.
- This ministry will permanently remove any employees or volunteers from their ministerial duties within MVMC if they are found guilty of abuse or molestation. Whenever termination of employment is a factor, we also will consult with legal counsel.

Dealing with Law Enforcement & News Media

- All ministry leaders, employees, and volunteers of this ministry will cooperate fully with law enforcement or governmental agencies investigating allegations of injury, abuse, or molestation.
- The leadership of this ministry will seek legal counsel as soon as possible after we receive notice of possible abuse or molestation within the organization. Advice from legal counsel will be the basis for our response to the allegations.

- One individual—a member of the leadership team, a staff member, a ministry leader, or our attorney—will be the designated spokesperson to handle all inquiries from the news media. Our spokesperson will be the only person to convey information concerning the situation, doing so in a prudent manner to avoid compromising an ongoing investigation and to maintain the privacy of the individuals involved.

Annual Review

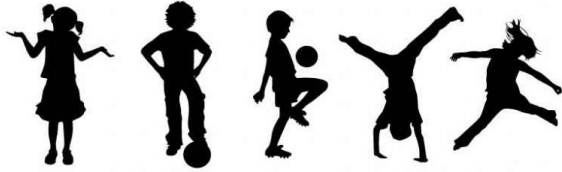
- Paid ministry employees and all volunteers working in any capacity with children, youth, or disabled adults will complete a brief renewal application (see attached) annually.
- Should the renewal application indicate that any employees or volunteers have become unsuitable for working with children, youth, or disabled adults, they will be removed immediately from their current position. They will not be considered for positions involving work with other similar groups.

Revision of Policy and Procedures

The leadership of this ministry will regularly review this policy and the procedures established within it. If necessary, the policies and procedures will be modified in accordance with the bylaws of MVMC. When changes are made, ministry leaders will communicate them to all employees and volunteers affected by the policy changes.

Resources

- Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
<http://www.dhs.state.pa.us/findaform/childabusehistoryclearanceforms/>
This website contains a list of each clearance needed, and the websites where they can be obtained.
- PA Child Abuse History Clearance Online: <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/CWIS>
- Pennsylvania State Police: <https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>
- Federal Bureau of Investigation: www.pa.cogentid.com//index_dpw.htm



Purpose

Mountain View Mennonite Chapel’s Children’s Ministries promote discovering God, growing spiritually, and developing gifts to equip young people for living in today’s world.

Some of the ways we achieve this are through:

- Nursery care for birth to 2 years during each service.
- Sunday School for age 2 to Grade 12.
- Children’s Church for age 2 to Grade 4.
- Youth group Bible study and activities for grades 7 – 12

Verification and Release

I recognize that Mountain View Chapel is relying on the accuracy of the information I provide on the Ministry Screening Form. Accordingly, I attest and affirm that the information I have provided is absolutely true and correct. I have carefully read the policy and procedures of Mountain View Chapel concerning Child Protection and I agree to abide by them and to protect the health and safety of the children or youth assigned to my care or supervision at all times. I understand that upon completion of the screening process, I will be considered a Mandatory Reporter and must make an immediate and direct report of suspected child abuse to ChildLine either electronically at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis or by calling 1-800-932-0313. After making the report, I understand that I am required to immediately notify the person in charge.

Signature

Date:

Mountain View Chapel Children’s Ministry

Purpose, Protection Policy & Screening Form



Mountain View Mennonite Chapel
P.O. Box 184
104 Shelley Drive Reedsville, PA 17084
717-667-3312
office@mountainviewchapel.org
www.mountainviewchapel.org

MVMC Child Protection Policies

The disturbing and traumatic rise of physical and sexual abuse of children has claimed the attention of our nation and society. Physical abuse is injury or death inflicted other than by accidental means. Sexual abuse is any act of a sexual nature upon or with a child. The following policies reflect our commitment to provide protective care of a child, youth and volunteers who participate in church-sponsored activities.

1. All adult volunteers or staff members working with youth or children must complete the attached screening form and sign the statement on the back page.
2. All adults responsible for the welfare of a child or having direct contact with children and/or youth must comply with all clearance requirements according to Pennsylvania State Law. All clearances must be obtained every 36 months. This will include:
 - PA State Police Criminal Record Check
 - PA Child Abuse History Clearance
 - Signed disclaimer affirming no charges in other states that would prohibit selection as a volunteer

If the volunteer has not been a resident of PA continuously for the past 10 years, an FBI Criminal Background Check must be obtained in addition to the above mentioned clearances.
3. Anyone who poses a threat to others, or has a prior history of physical or sexual abuse directed against another person, will be removed immediately from consideration for any church sponsored activity or program for children or youth.
4. Adults should immediately report any behaviors which seem abusive or inappropriate to their supervisor and are required to make an immediate and direct report of suspected child abuse to ChildLine.

The children's ministry screening form is to be completed by everyone at MVMC working in any capacity with children and youth, from infancy to age 18. It is being used to help provide a safe and secure environment for children and youth to encounter the love of God and to grow in Him through the various programs and activities that we offer.



Your name: _____ Today's date: _____

Present address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Email: _____

Have you ever been arrested for any reason?

_____ No _____ Yes (If yes, please explain) _____

_____ If Yes, in which state? _____

Have you ever been convicted of, or pleaded guilty or no contest to, any crime?

_____ No _____ Yes (If yes, please explain) _____

_____ If Yes, in which state? _____

Have you ever engaged in, or been accused of, child molestation, exploitation, or abuse?

_____ No _____ Yes (If yes, please explain) _____

_____ If Yes, in which state? _____

Do you have any traits or tendencies that could pose a threat to children, youth or others?

_____ No _____ Yes (If yes, please explain) _____

Mountain View Chapel Annual Renewal Application Volunteers and Employees

Your name: _____ Today's date: _____

Present address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

Email: _____

Which area(s) of ministry are you currently involved? _____

What other areas of this ministry, if any, do you plan to become involved? _____

Have you ever been arrested for any reason?

_____ No _____ Yes (If yes, please explain) _____

Have you ever been convicted of, or pleaded guilty or no contest to, any crime?

_____ No _____ Yes (If yes, please explain) _____

Have you ever engaged in, or been accused of, any child molestation, exploitation, or abuse?

_____ No _____ Yes (If yes, please explain) _____

Do you have any traits or tendencies that could pose any threat to children, youth or others?

_____ No _____ Yes (If yes, please explain) _____

I recognize that Mountain View Chapel is relying on the accuracy of the information I provide on the Worker Renewal Application. Accordingly, I attest and affirm that the information I have provided is absolutely true and correct. I have carefully read the policy and procedures of Mountain View Chapel concerning Child Protection and I agree to abide by them and to protect the health and safety of the children or youth assigned to my care or supervision at all times.

Printed Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

February 8, 2015

Dear Members and Friends of Mountain View Chapel,

Child sexual abuse is a growing moral and legal problem in America, even in churches and church-related settings. If we are to encourage the spiritual development of our young people at Mountain View Chapel, we must first take reasonable precautions to provide them with an environment in which they are protected from such abuse.

Accusations and actual incidents of child abuse have far-reaching effects. Child abuse could scar a child for life and devastate a family. Ministries are tarnished by such incidents; some have been severely damaged by the legal and emotional fallout. Surely, you will agree that we need to take every reasonable precaution to prevent child abuse of any kind from happening in our church.

Our liability insurance carrier, Brotherhood Mutual, has brought to our attention a very important change to the Pennsylvania Volunteer Clearance Requirement Law. This will include all adults over the age of 18 responsible for the welfare of a child or having direct contact with children. In our case, it would include people helping with VBS, nursery, teaching Sunday school, etc. The new screening procedure at Mountain View Chapel will include completion of a screening form in addition to the following clearances:

- 1) Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check**
- 2) ChildLine (Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance through the Department of Human Services)**
- 3) Signed disclaimer (included on the screening form) affirming no charges in other states that would prohibit selection as a volunteer.**

If the volunteer has NOT been a resident of PA continuously for the past 10 years an FBI criminal background check will be required in addition to the clearances mentioned above.

These clearances must be renewed every 36 months.

There will be a cost incurred with each clearance. The PA State Police and ChildLine clearances cost \$10 each. The FBI background check, if needed, is an additional \$27.50. Mountain View Chapel is willing to pay for half of each clearance, asking that the other half be paid by the volunteer. However, if an individual is unable to pay their half, Mountain View Chapel will cover the cost. It is our goal to ensure that all individuals who desire to teach and care for our children, have the opportunity to do so, without creating a financial burden.

Each coordinator in charge of the affected areas of ministry, will be asked to inform their volunteers of the need for clearances, and will be expected to ensure that the proper steps have been taken by the volunteer, to keep the process moving forward. Each volunteer has the option to obtain their own clearances online (see below for web addresses). If a volunteer chooses to do so, all that will be required is a copy of each clearance listed above, in addition to the screening form. All forms should be submitted to the secretary. If a volunteer chooses to have Mountain View Chapel obtain the clearances, the volunteer must submit a completed screening form, request for criminal record check form and PA child abuse history clearance form, along with their payment (if applicable). These forms can be found in the foyer. The secretary will then obtain the clearances for them. All records will be maintained by the secretary. If you have questions about our new child abuse prevention plan, you can contact LaCosta Frank, Pastor Dave, or any member of the Elder board. They will be happy to discuss our program with you in greater detail. We urge you to support our plans for protecting our children and the church from possible allegations or actual incidents of child sexual abuse. The problem is nationwide. We must do our part to ensure that it does not happen at Mountain View Chapel—for the sake of our children and the ministry of our church.

Sincerely,
Mountain View Chapel Elder Board:
Michael Yoder
Russ Ritchey
Dan DeVecchis
Paul Zook
Joe Yoder
Pastor David Aungst
Secretary / Treasurer
LaCosta Frank

Pennsylvania Department of Human Services
<http://www.dhs.state.pa.us/findaform/childabusehistoryclearanceforms/>
This website contains a list of each clearance needed, and the websites where they can be obtained.

- PA Child Abuse History Clearance Online:
<https://www.compass.state.pa.us/CWIS>
- Pennsylvania State Police: <https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>
- Federal Bureau of Investigation:
www.pa.cogentid.com/index_dpw.htm