

Christ Church Kensington Parish Youth and Children's Ministries

Guidelines for Volunteers

September 2013

Christ Church Parish Kensington adheres to the practices developed by the Episcopal Diocese of Washington as described on the Diocese's Standards for Youth & Children's Ministries website:

<http://www.edow.org/for-clergy-and-parish-leaders/safe-church/standards-for-youth-and-childrens-ministry>

Individuals looking to work with children and youth at Christ Church (Sunday School teachers, infant room volunteers, youth leaders, overnight chaperones, children's choir and acolyte trainers/leaders) must adhere to the following guidelines:

- 1/ be a member of the Parish for at least six months
- 2/ complete the Diocese's Safeguarding God's Children class as soon as possible or within three months of application (renewal every three years / online class acceptable for renewals)
- 3/ complete and sign the Christ Church Child and Youth Volunteer Registration Form
- 4/ meet with the Christ Church Assistant Rector

The Assistant Rector will track training and application compliance for all volunteers as they do for paid workers and check the Maryland Sex Offender registry online. In addition to the application process, paid staff and contractors who work with children or youth will receive a background check administered by an approved Diocesan organization.

CCPK Website:

Children's photos are not used on the website without a signed release form provided by the parents. Names or other identifying information about children or youth are never provided on the website.

Contact with Youth:

Use of email and texting should primarily be used for the whole group and not to individual youth. There should be no texting or email between youth and adult leaders without parents also being copied. Youth leaders calling individual youth must call parents first for permission to talk to the youth.

If adult leaders create a social networking site for their youth program, this site should be accessible to other adult leaders within the program and to all parents of youth. Adult leaders should use this page to send group messages and not use it for exclusive, personal messages.

Children and Youth Volunteer Registration

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Numbers:

Home: _____

Cell: _____

E-mail: _____

Volunteer Duties: _____

Do you have any experience worker/volunteering with children and youth? [Please list experiences, specialized training, volunteer locations, dates, etc.]

Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children and Youth

The Diocese of Washington and Christ Church Parish Kensington are committed to creating and promoting a positive, nurturing environment for our children's and youth ministries that protect our children and youth from abuse and our Church volunteers from misunderstandings. When creating safe boundaries for children and youth, it is important to establish what types of affection are appropriate and inappropriate, otherwise that decision is left to each individual. Stating which behaviors are appropriate and inappropriate allows Church volunteers to comfortably show positive affection in ministry, and yet identify individuals who are not maintaining safe boundaries with children or youth.

These Guidelines are based, in large part, on avoiding behaviors known to be used by child molesters to groom children or youth and their parents for future abuse. The following guidelines are to be carefully followed by all Church volunteers working around or with children or youth.

1. Love and affection are part of church life and ministry. There are many ways to demonstrate affection while maintaining positive and safe boundaries with children and youth. Some **positive** and **appropriate** forms of affection are listed below:

- Brief hugs.
- Pats on the shoulder or back.
- Handshakes.
- "High-fives" and hand slapping.
- Verbal praise.
- Touching hands, faces, shoulders and arms of children or youth.
- Arms around shoulders.
- Holding hands while walking with small children.
- Sitting beside small children.
- Kneeling or bending down for hugs with small children.
- Holding hands during prayer.
- Pats on the head when culturally appropriate. (For example, this gesture should typically be avoided in some Asian communities).

2. The following forms of affection are considered **inappropriate** with children and youth in ministry

setting because many of them are the behaviors that child molesters use to groom children or youth

and their parents for later molestation or can be, in and of themselves, sexual abuse.

- Inappropriate or lengthy embraces.
- Kisses on the mouth.
- Holding children over three years old on the lap.
- Touching bottoms, chests or genital areas other than for appropriate diapering or toileting of infants and toddlers.
- Showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, staff only areas or other private rooms.
- Occupying a bed with a child or youth
- Touching knees or legs of children or youth.
- Wrestling with children or youth.
- Tickling children or youth.
- Piggyback rides.
- Any type of massage given by a child or youth to an adult.
- Any type of massage given by an adult to a child or youth.
- Any form of unwanted affection.
- Comments or compliments (spoken, written, or electronic) that relate to physique or body

development. Examples would be, "You sure are developing," or "You look really hot in those jeans."

- Snapping bras or giving wedgies or similar touch of underwear whether or not it is covered by other clothing.
- Giving gifts or money to individual children or youth.
- Private meals with individual children or youth.

Read and initial each item to signify your agreement to comply with the statement.

___ I agree to do my best to prevent abuse and neglect among children and youth involved in church activities and services.

___ I agree not to physically, sexually or emotionally abuse or neglect a child or youth.

___ I agree to comply with the policies set by the Diocese of Washington in the Standards in Youth & Children's Ministry. <http://www.edow.org/for-clergy-and-parish-leaders/safe-church/standards-for-youth-and-childrens-ministry>

___ I agree to comply with the above **Guidelines for Appropriate Affection** with children and youth.

___ In the event that I observe any inappropriate behaviors or possible policy violations with children or youth, I agree to immediately report my observations.

___ I acknowledge my obligation and responsibility to protect children and youth and agree to report known or suspected abuse of children or youth to appropriate church leaders and state authorities.

___ I understand that the church will not tolerate abuse of children and youth and I agree to comply in spirit and in action with this position.

I have read and understand the above provisions.

Print Name: _____

Signature and date

Parent Responsibilities

Parents should pick up children promptly from Sunday School or Youth Programs at the designated time and place. No child under 12 (or sixth grade) will be allowed to leave classrooms without a parent or older sibling accompanying them.

Parents should not allow children under 12 to roam freely in the church. Parents or older siblings should accompany children to use the restrooms during church services or visiting other areas of the church. Many rooms are kept unlocked (e.g. Kitchen, restrooms, library, classrooms) for the convenience of parishioners and children are not allowed unaccompanied into these or other indoor or outdoor church spaces. With the exception of “following the Cross” to Sunday School classes after the morning service, parents should communicate with teachers / leaders directly if their youth or children are being dropped off in their care.

For youth meetings not held on Sunday mornings, or when other groups may be using Christ Church facilities, youth should not wait unaccompanied outside the church for parent pick up. If youth are not waiting outside with their teachers, parents should park and retrieve their children from inside the building.

A child will not be accepted in a classroom when any of the following conditions exist or have existed in the past 24 hours:

- Fever
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Any symptom of childhood diseases, i.e. scarlet fever, mumps, chicken pox, measles, etc.
- Common cold from onset through one week
- Sore throat
- Any unexplained rash
- Any skin infection boils, ringworm, and impetigo
- Pink eye or other eye irritations
- Communicable disease of any type
- When a child is thought to be sick, parents will be notified/paged to pick up the child.