

GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP OF SUSSEX

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY



SEE THAT YOU DO NOT DESPISE ONE OF THESE LITTLE ONES.
FOR I TELL YOU THAT IN HEAVEN THEIR ANGELS ALWAYS SEE
THE FACE OF MY FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN.

MATTHEW 18:10

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Purpose	3
Scope & Definitions	4
Screening Procedures	5
Safety Policy & Procedures	7
Recognizing Child Abuse	11
Reporting Abuse	12
Ongoing Training & Education	14

Children’s Ministry Policy & Procedures

Ages 6 weeks to 23 months	15
Age 2 years	18
Ages 3-4 years	21
Grades K5 - 6	24
Grades 7 - 12	27

Children’s Ministry Appendixes

Appendix A	30
Appendix B	32
Appendix C	34
Appendix D	35
Appendix E	36
Appendix F	37
Appendix G	38

GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP OF SUSSEX (HEREAFTER "GFS") HAS A WIDE VARIETY OF PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH RANGING FROM NURSERY TO HIGH SCHOOL. THE PURPOSE OF EACH PROGRAM IS TO INTRODUCE THE CHILDREN IN OUR CARE TO THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

GFS SEEKS TO PROVIDE A SAFE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH WHO PARTICIPATE IN OUR PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES. BY IMPLEMENTING THE PRACTICES BELOW, OUR GOAL IS TO PROTECT THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH OF GFS FROM INCIDENTS OF ABUSE, MISCONDUCT, OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR WHILE ALSO PROTECTING OUR PAID STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS FROM FALSE ACCUSATIONS. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT ALL GFS PAID STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS UNDERSTAND AND IMPLEMENT THESE GUIDELINES TO HELP PREVENT ABUSE AGAINST CHILDREN.

PURPOSE

These procedures are designed to reduce the risk of child abuse by:

- ❖ Providing a safe, secure environment for everyone involved including children, youth, parents, paid staff and volunteer staff.
- ❖ Assisting GFS in evaluating a person's suitability to supervise and oversee activities of children and youth by providing a screening process for paid staff and volunteers.
- ❖ Reducing the potential for false accusations of any form of abuse made against volunteers and paid staff, as well as the elimination of any actual abuse.
- ❖ Providing a system to respond to alleged victims of abuse and their families, as well as the alleged perpetrator, and providing a system to report potential abuse or inappropriate behavior.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all GFS sponsored Children & Youth programs and activities both on and off premises. It does not apply to programs and activities not sponsored by GFS. This policy also pertains to interactions and activities prior to and immediately after programs sponsored by GFS. While it is not directly the responsibility of paid staff or volunteers to oversee activities prior to or following these events, it is strongly encouraged that parents be aware, guide, and instruct their children on proper behaviors and interactions prior to and following activities sponsored by GFS.

DEFINITIONS

The following terms are used herein and defined as follows:

- ❖ **Paid Staff/Employee:** Any pastor, minister, preacher, or employee who is paid by GFS.
- ❖ **Children/Youth/Minor/Student:** Any person who has not reached his/her 18th birthday or the age of majority as defined by state law.
- ❖ **Adult:** A person who has reached his/her 18th birthday or age of majority as defined by state law. In the case of a senior in high school who has reached this age, they would be considered Adult status in relation to the Child Protection Policy.
- ❖ **Worker/Leader/Teacher:** Any paid or unpaid person engaged or involved in activities and who is entrusted with the care and supervision of minors, or a person who directly oversees and/or exerts control or oversight over minors or adults. *Teachers are specifically designated to teach and educate minors and adults and must be members in good standing with GFS.
- ❖ **Designated Authorities:** The person(s) assigned by GFS Elders to handle all reports related to the Child Protection Policy.
- ❖ **MinistrySafe:** Describes the online company which administers and stores the information for the sexual abuse awareness training, background checks, applications for service, and screening records.

SCREENING PROCEDURES

All persons who desire to work with GFS children and youth will be screened. This includes adults, minors, or students, who only desire to help out “once in a while.” This will help us maintain a safe environment. Screening includes the following and is subject to ongoing checks:

- ❖ **Sexual Abuse Awareness Training:** No applicant will be considered for any position involving contact with minors until he/she has completed the Sexual Abuse Awareness Training through MinistrySafe.
- ❖ **Six Month Rule:** No applicant will be considered for any position involving contact with minors until he/she has been a member or regular attender of GFS for a minimum of six (6) months. Exceptions may be granted by the Elders. Any exceptions will be noted in Elder meeting minutes.
- ❖ **Written Application:** All persons seeking to work with minors must complete and sign a written Ministry Application (Appendix A), which will include two references. This application will be checked by a designated authority prior to ministry service. All screening documentation will be maintained in confidence at GFS. Designated authorities consist of Elders, specified leaders of areas of ministry, and assigned leaders/helpers by those specified leaders.
- ❖ **Personal Interview:** A face-to-face interview with all new applicants will be scheduled with a GFS ministry leader and another designated authority of the church to discuss suitability for the position. In the case of minors, the presence of a parent would be requested.
- ❖ **Criminal Background Check:** A background check is required for all employees (regardless of position) and for all adult volunteers. On rare occasions, a background check may be required for minors. Background checks will be overseen and requested by the specified ministry leaders.

Any person who has been convicted of child abuse (sexual, physical, and/or emotional), or is a convicted sex offender, will not be allowed to work with minors in any church-sponsored event. GFS also reserves the discretion to deny any person the opportunity to work or volunteer

based upon past criminal convictions, not merely those related to abuse or sexual offense. Failure to disclose a criminal conviction, accusation or charge on the application will also be a disqualifying event.

The Authorization For Criminal Background Check (Appendix A) and results will be maintained in confidence at GFS. All Criminal Background Checks will be updated every two (2) years. Administration of background checks will be overseen by MinistrySafe. The director of the ministry or individuals the director delegates will be responsible for the background checks and application process.

- ❖ **Driver Clearance Form:** All drivers of minors must be at least 21 years of age, have a valid driver's license, current auto insurance, and complete a Driver Clearance Form (Appendix A, grey box). GFS is only responsible for drivers of minors during GFS sponsored activities. Any consent given for any other event or occasion is at the discretion and agreement of the parents and that driver.

SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Adequate and appropriate supervision by screened and trained staff and volunteers is required to ensure the safety of the program participants and to maintain a viable learning environment. Responsibility for adhering to these guidelines resides with the GFS ministry leader. Teachers and assistants are expected to support and be aware of these guidelines. GFS will follow these preferred staffing policies and procedures:

- ❖ **Two Worker Rule:** Minimum supervisory standards will include the Two-Worker Rule. The Two-Worker Rule requires that no matter the size of the group or the setting, there will always be at least two unrelated workers present, one of whom must be an adult. In the case of single teacher, the second worker may be an adult “monitor” who moves in and out of rooms, checking the church’s halls and bathrooms. Related workers may serve together provided there is a third unrelated worker present.

Exceptions to the Two Worker Rule:

- ◆ **Transportation:** Adult workers may transport minors to and from GFS-sponsored events with the written permission of their parents/guardians provided there are two or more minors present in the vehicle. For the protection of all, workers should never be alone in a car with a minor unless an exception has been granted by the Elders or designated authorities. Informal arrangements made by parents are not within the scope of these policy recommendations. Please see Appendix G for details.
- ◆ **Restroom Use:** One adult female worker may escort minors to the restroom provided she is never alone with a child in a restroom with the door closed or in a restroom stall with a closed door. (See “Restroom Guidelines” in the age-specific policies & procedures).
- ◆ **High School Small Groups:** One adult leader may meet with two or more unrelated high school students of the same sex in approved space at GFS.
- ❖ **Open Door Policy:** Classroom doors should remain open unless there is a window in the door or beside it.
- ❖ **Visitors:** It is permissible for a parent to join his/her child in the child’s classroom, even if that parent is not an approved child care

worker. While in the room, a parent should limit his/her interaction to his/her own child. He/She may engage in conversation with other children, but he/she should be focused primarily on his/her own child. Please inform the children's ministry coordinator when there is a visitor in the classroom.

- ❖ **Counseling:** In cases where an adult has a legitimate reason to be alone with a child (e.g. counseling a minor where discretion is required), he/she will obtain written consent from the minor's parent or guardian prior to being alone with the minor (All-Year Parental Consent and Waiver, Appendix B) and notify another adult of the location and with whom he/she is meeting. Counseling should be done in a public place where private conversations are possible but occur in full or partial view of others. Male adults must counsel male youth and children; female adults must counsel female youth and children. A male/female team is generally appropriate for counseling either gender.
- ❖ **Unaccompanied Minors:** GFS is not responsible or liable for unsupervised minors during times outside of GFS sponsored activities. It is the responsibility of the parents to manage and be aware of their children's whereabouts and behaviors prior to and following worship service times and other GFS sponsored activities.
- ❖ **Ministry Guidelines:** Each ministry department will develop age appropriate guidelines created to meet their unique requirements. These guidelines will be in accord with this protection policy and will be reviewed and approved by the Elders.
- ❖ **Sex Offenders:** All persons with past histories of sexual offenses will be asked to sign a Limited Access Agreement and a Consent, Authorization, and Release form (Appendices C & D). An offender who refuses to sign should know that if he/she enters the church or its property, he/she will be asked to leave.
- ❖ **Discipline:** It is the policy of GFS that staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any way for behavior management of children or students. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behavior by a student(s). If a student is unruly or fails

to comply with verbal warnings or instructions from staff/volunteers that student will be asked to leave (if not endangered by doing so) or the student's parent will be contacted to pick up the student. In the event of a fight or a physical altercation, staff/volunteer will verbally redirect students involved and will try to avoid physical intervention. Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported immediately to parents and the designated ministry leader.

- ❖ **Intoxicants:** Staff and volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drugs while in any GFS facility, while traveling with students, or while working with or supervising students in any GFS sponsored activities or events.
- ❖ **Nudity:** Staff and volunteers should never be nude in the presence of students in their care. In the event there is a situation that may call for the possibility of nudity (i.e. changing clothes during a pool party, weekend or overnight retreat, etc), the staff member/volunteer will submit a plan to the Elders or ministry leaders over the specific ministry concerning arrangements for showering or changing clothes.
- ❖ **Displays of Affection:** Touch is an essential part of nurturing and should be age and developmentally appropriate. Be aware of and sensitive to differences in sexual development, cultural differences, family backgrounds, individual personalities, and special needs. Staff members, ministry leaders, and volunteers must agree and adhere to these standards at all times. This will be re-emphasized at the time of application for service in this ministry. Comfortability with any display of affection must be immediately ended at the first sign of the minors dislike or any perceived discomfort. The following guidelines are to be promoted for pure, genuine, and positive displays of God's love:
 - ◆ **HUGS:** A one-arm side hug is an appropriate display of affection. Avoid initiating full contact, body-to-body hugs, or kisses.
 - ◆ **LAP SITTING:** Sitting on laps is appropriate for children 4 and younger. Do not encourage lap-sitting with school-aged children, rather, encourage them to sit next to you.
 - ◆ **CASUAL TOUCH:** Gentle contact during activities may be on

children's heads, shoulders, arms and hands.

- ◆ **BACK RUBS:** Anyone working with our children should not give back-rubs. This behavior may easily be misinterpreted.
- ◆ **TICKLING:** Tickling can be a warm, engaging and playful action and can also be used to help get a child out of a sour mood. However, this can be misinterpreted by some or unwelcome by the child. Please use discretion and limit this action to children ages 4 and younger.

❖ **Inappropriate Touching:** Touching a child's private areas or the clothing covering those areas and all other forms of child sexual abuse are strictly prohibited. The only exception is the necessary hygienic care for infants or toddlers.

RECOGNIZING CHILD ABUSE

According to the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, hereafter WDCF, "Child abuse" is the mistreatment of a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caretaker, someone living in their home, or someone who works with or around children. The mistreatment must cause injury or put the child at risk of physical injury. Child abuse can be physical (such as burns or broken bones), sexual (such as fondling or incest), or emotional. Neglect happens when there is failure, refusal or inability on the part of a caregiver, for reasons other than poverty, to provide necessary care, food, clothing, medical or dental care or shelter so as to seriously endanger the physical health of the child.

Prior to serving all staff and volunteers are instructed in recognizing the signs of abuse and are trained to report suspected or reported abuse to a staff member and the appropriate authorities. For more information visit the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (WDCF).

Reporting Suspected Abuse

GFS has a zero tolerance for abuse in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every staff member and volunteer at GFS to act in the best interest of students in every program.

If you are a volunteer and suspect or learn of inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervisions, poor role-modeling, etc.), or suspect child abuse (physical, emotional, and sexual) or neglect, you must immediately report this to two individuals. These individuals may be a GFS ministry leader and a staff member or Elder. If necessary, a written report will be forwarded to WDCF and if it is determined that the child is in any type of danger, WDCF will be contacted immediately (Incident Report, Appendix E). Contact information for WDCF is on the following page.

If you are an employee of GFS and you are responsible for the care of children, you are considered a mandated reporter. As such, you are required by the State of Wisconsin to report child abuse to the WDCF and file a report.

REPORTING ABUSE

THE PROCESS OF HANDLING AN INCIDENT

1. A quick, compassionate, objective, immediate, and unified response to an alleged incident of child abuse is expected. Allegations must be taken seriously and investigated expeditiously by designated authorities and in accordance with state law. A report will also be made to the police department, Child Protective Services, or another appropriate agency.
2. No accused will be addressed by anyone other than the designated authorities until the safety of the minor or victim is secured. Immediate steps must also be taken to ensure that the alleged perpetrator is not left alone with minors.
3. The parent/guardian of the child will be notified by a designated authority immediately.
4. The accused perpetrator should be treated with dignity, not confronted with anger or hostility. He/She will be relieved temporarily of his/her duties until the investigation is completed.
5. A written record of the incident as well as steps and actions taken will be kept (Appendix E).
6. All details, interviews, and information will remain confidential to those legitimately involved in the investigation. Any individual or group of individuals responsible for a breach in this confidentiality is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination from their position.
7. No victim or individual involved in an allegation or anyone responsible for investigating an allegation will be retaliated against.
8. If the accused is cleared of all allegations, he/she will be reinstated to his/her position at the discretion of the Elders. Everyone within the organization who was told of the investigation will be informed of the same.
9. If abuse is confirmed, the accused will be dismissed from his/her position with cause.

10. Pastoral support will be available to all persons involved with the incident as indicated. Appropriate specialized counseling will also be made available to the victim of child abuse and his/her family as well as to the alleged offender and his/her family.

WDCF CONTACT INFORMATION:

Department of Children and Families
201 East Washington Avenue, Second Floor
P.O. Box 8916
Madison, WI 53703-8916
Main Contact Telephone Number: 608-422-7000
Fax: 608-266-6836
Email: dcfweb@wisconsin.gov

ONGOING TRAINING & EDUCATION

Ongoing training and education is a requirement for every GFS staff member, Elder, and approved volunteer working with children and youth. New employees and volunteers will be required to read the Child Protection Policy. After the initial orientation all employees and volunteers shall attend a yearly refresher training and education on child abuse prevention and reporting requirements.

CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

The membership of the Child Protection Committee shall not exceed seven (7) members and shall include a minimum of one Elder, the youth and children's ministry leaders, the administrative assistant, and at least one, but not more than three other person/s they deem appropriate. At least one member must be a female. The Child Protection Committee shall annually review and propose any revisions to this policy and shall be responsible for the administration and interpretations of this policy. They will manage and oversee the Child Protection Policy in the following areas:

- ◆ Bi-Yearly Policy Updates
- ◆ Screening Procedures
- ◆ Orientation
- ◆ Periodic Refresher Training
- ◆ Coordination with MinistrySafe to maintain appropriate documentation
- ◆ Serve as "Designated Authorities" for the purpose of reporting
- ◆ Assist with crisis management when allegations are made
- ◆ Be available for interviews/evaluations on an as needed basis

EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY

Any exceptions to this policy must be approved in writing by the Elders. A written statement justifying the reasons for the exception shall be prepared by the person(s) requesting the exception, with copies distributed to the Elders.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY POLICY & PROCEDURES

AGES 6 WEEKS – 23 MONTHS

All staff and volunteer workers will adhere to the GFS Child Protection Policy at all times.

REGISTRATION

Proper written parental/guardian consent and medical release forms for minor's participation in all GFS Children and Youth (hereafter "C&Y") ministry programs must be obtained and documented annually (All-Year Parental Consent and Waiver, Appendix B).

STAFFING RATIOS

When nursery is open the Two Worker Rule (please see page 6) will be maintained at all times.

- ◆ A ratio of one approved adult worker to no more than 4 minors shall apply

SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

In order to show love to one another and to help bear the burden of the ministry, members or individuals who consistently make use of the nursery ministry for their children will be required to serve a minimum of 1 Sunday per month. If necessary due to a lack of volunteers an additional Sunday may be required, but will not exceed 2 Sundays per month.

AGE/GENDER GUIDELINES

- ◆ Youth assistants will be a minimum of 13 years old and may assist with the minors. At least one adult female worker will be present.
- ◆ A husband must always serve with his wife, along with another non-family member.

YOUTH ASSISTANT PRE-SCREENING GUIDELINES

A youth assistant may assist in GFS children's ministry programs as long as he/she is approved by the children's ministry coordinator, has completed a Ministry Application (Appendix A), and has completed the "Sexual Abuse Awareness Training" (through MinistrySafe). He/She must be under the supervision of an approved adult worker and must not be left alone with minors.

CHECK IN/CHECK OUT

A parent/guardian will be required to check-in their child at the self check-in location before each service/program. Visitors or parents/guardians in need of assistance can see the check-in volunteer or children's ministry coordinator. A name tag for each child will print along with a pickup tag. The name tag should be affixed to the child's back before checking the child into the nursery, and the parent/guardian will keep the pickup tag. At the nursery door the parent/guardian will be asked to leave appropriate instructions for the child's care, including cell phone number. A text will be sent to the parent's/guardian's cell phone if any needs arise for the child. The pickup tag should be shown to the nursery room supervisor when picking up a child. Children should be picked up at the appropriate end time and should be picked up by a parent or guardian.

RESTROOM GUIDELINES

- ◆ **Diaper Changing:** Diaper changing should be done at designated diapering stations in the nursery by adult females only, unless the adult is the child's parent. Diaper changing should be done in full or partial view of others.
- ◆ **Potty Training:** If the child is potty training parents are strongly encouraged to take their child to the restroom prior to drop off. If a child needs to use the restroom an approved female worker should escort the child to the restroom. For the protection of all, ministry workers should never be alone with a child in a restroom with the door closed or in a closed restroom stall with a child. If a problem arises when a child needs to use the toilet a parent or guardian should be contacted.

EMERGENCY AND SICK CHILD PROCEDURES

In cases of emergency or sickness the nursery volunteer will contact the ministry leader. The ministry leader will determine if the child's parent/guardian should be contacted to have the child removed from the nursery. Decisions about medical care will be left to the judgment of the parent/guardian.

Children with the following symptoms should NOT be dropped off:

- ◆ Nausea
- ◆ Diarrhea
- ◆ Vomiting

- ◆ Difficulty breathing
- ◆ Fever
- ◆ Runny nose with green or yellow discharge
- ◆ Lethargic demeanor
- ◆ Inability to participate in activities
- ◆ Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- ◆ Infected skin or eyes or an undiagnosed rash
- ◆ Severe itching of body or scalp
- ◆ Any unstated and known symptoms or suspected communicable/infectious disease

DISCIPLINE

Discipline should be carried out through instruction, training, and correction in a fair, firm, and consistent manner. Physical discipline will not be used by anyone other than the child's parents. For additional information please see the Child Protection Policy binder located in the nursery.

LIST OF APPROVED WORKERS

The children's ministry coordinator will maintain and regularly update a list of approved workers for the nursery that shall be referenced prior to scheduling workers or making any substitutions.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY POLICY & PROCEDURES

AGE 2 YEARS

All staff and volunteer workers will adhere to the GFS Child Protection Policy at all times.

REGISTRATION

Proper written parental/guardian consent and medical release forms for minor's participation in all GFS Children and Youth (hereafter "C&Y") ministry programs must be obtained and documented annually (All-Year Parental Consent and Waiver, Appendix B).

STAFFING RATIOS

When classrooms are open the Two Worker Rule (please see page 6) will be maintained at all times. During all GFS C&Y Ministry programs, a ratio of one approved worker to no more than seven minors (1:7) will be maintained.

AGE/GENDER GUIDELINES

Youth assistants will be a minimum of 13 years old. At least one adult female worker will be present.

YOUTH ASSISTANT PRE-SCREENING GUIDELINES

A youth assistant may assist in GFS children's ministry programs as long as he/she is approved by the children's ministry coordinator and has completed a Ministry Application (Appendix A). He/She must be under the supervision of an approved adult worker and must not be left alone with minors.

CHECK IN/CHECK OUT

A parent/guardian will be required to check-in their child at the self check-in location before each service/program. Visitors or parents/guardians in need of assistance can see the check-in volunteer or children's ministry coordinator. A name tag for each child will be printed along with a pickup tag. The name tag should be affixed to the child's back before checking the child into the classroom, and the parent/guardian will keep the pickup tag. At the door to the classroom the parent/guardian will be asked to leave appropriate instructions for the child's care, including cell phone number. A text will be sent to the parent's/guardian's cell phone if any needs arise for the child. The pickup tag should be shown to the nursery room supervisor when picking up their child. Children should be picked up at the appropriate

end time and should be picked up by a parent or guardian.

RESTROOM GUIDELINES

Parents are strongly encouraged to take their children to the restroom prior to class. If a child from the 2's room needs to use the restroom, please use the one closest to the 2's classroom. An approved adult female worker should escort the child. If a child from the 3s classroom needs to use the restroom an approved adult female worker should escort the child to the 2's restroom. For the protection of all, ministry workers should never be alone with a child in a restroom with the door closed or in a closed restroom stall with a child.

- ◆ **Diaper/Potty Training Procedures:** If a child is still in diapers and/or potty training, please refer to the applicable "Ages 6 weeks- 24 Months" section of the Child Protection Policy.

EMERGENCY AND SICK CHILD PROCEDURES

In cases of emergency or sickness, an adult leader will contact the children's ministry coordinator. The children's ministry coordinator will determine if the child's parent/guardian should be contacted to have their child removed from the classroom. Decisions about medical care will be left to the judgment of the parent/guardian.

Children with the following symptoms should NOT be dropped off:

- ◆ Nausea
- ◆ Diarrhea
- ◆ Vomiting
- ◆ Difficulty breathing
- ◆ Fever
- ◆ Runny nose with green or yellow discharge
- ◆ Lethargic demeanor
- ◆ Inability to participate in activities
- ◆ Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- ◆ Infected skin or eyes or an undiagnosed rash
- ◆ Severe itching of body or scalp
- ◆ Any unstated and known symptoms or suspected communicable/infectious disease

DISCIPLINE

Discipline should be carried out through instruction, training, and correction in a fair, firm and consistent manner. Physical discipline will not be used by anyone other than the child's parents. For additional information please see the copy of the Child Protection Policy located at the child check-in kiosk.

LIST OF APPROVED WORKERS

The children's ministry coordinator will maintain and regularly update a list of approved workers for the C&Y Ministries that shall be referenced prior to scheduling workers or making any substitutions.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY POLICY & PROCEDURES

AGES 3-4 YEARS

All staff and volunteer workers will adhere to the GFS Child Protection Policy at all times.

REGISTRATION

Proper written parental/guardian consent and medical release forms for minor's participation in all GFS Children and Youth (hereafter "C&Y") Ministry programs must be obtained and documented annually (All-Year Parental Consent and Waiver, appendix B).

STAFFING RATIOS

When classrooms are open the Two Worker Rule (please see page 6) will be maintained at all times. During all GFS C&Y Ministry programs, a ratio of one approved worker to no more than seven minors (1:7) will be maintained.

AGE/GENDER GUIDELINES

Youth assistants will be a minimum of 13 years old. At least one female worker will be present.

YOUTH ASSISTANT PRE-SCREENING GUIDELINES

A youth assistant may assist in GFS children's ministry programs as long as he/she is approved by the children's ministry coordinator and has completed a Ministry Application (Appendix A). He/She must be under the supervision of an approved adult worker and must not be left alone with minors.

CHECK IN/CHECK OUT

A parent/guardian will be required to check-in their child at the self check-in location before each service/program. Visitors or parents/guardians in need of assistance can see the check-in volunteer or children's ministry coordinator. A name tag for each child will be printed along with a pickup tag. The name tag should be affixed to the child's back before checking the child into the children's ministry, and the parent/guardian will keep the pickup tag. At the check-in counter the parent/guardian will be asked to leave appropriate instructions for the child's care, including cell phone number. A text will be sent to the parent's/guardian's cell phone if any needs arise for the child. The pickup tag should be shown to the nursery room supervisor when picking up their child. Children should be picked

up at the appropriate end time and should be picked up by a parent or guardian.

RESTROOM GUIDELINES

Parents are strongly encouraged to take their child(ren) to the restroom prior to class. If a child needs to use the restroom during class an approved adult female worker should escort the child to the restroom. The worker will first screen the restroom to determine if it is currently in use. Whenever possible the worker should wait until the restroom is empty before sending a child in or utilize another restroom. While the child uses the restroom the worker will remain outside the restroom in the hallway with the door propped open and wait for the child. If a child is taking longer than seems necessary the worker should call the child's name. If a child requires assistance the worker should discreetly leave the stall door open as the child is assisted. For the protection of all, ministry workers should never be alone with a child in a restroom with the door closed or in a closed restroom stall with a child. Please alert the adult monitor and/or the children's ministry coordinator if additional adult assistance is required in order to adhere to the Child Protection Policy.

EMERGENCY AND SICK CHILD PROCEDURES

In cases of emergency or sickness an adult leader will contact the children's ministry coordinator. The children's ministry coordinator will determine if the child's parent/guardian should be contacted to have their child removed from the classroom. Decisions about medical care will be left to the judgment of the parent/guardian.

Children with the following symptoms should NOT be dropped off:

- ◆ Nausea
- ◆ Diarrhea
- ◆ Vomiting
- ◆ Difficulty breathing
- ◆ Fever
- ◆ Runny nose with green or yellow discharge
- ◆ Lethargic demeanor
- ◆ Inability to participate in activities
- ◆ Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- ◆ Infected skin or eyes or an undiagnosed rash
- ◆ Severe itching of body or scalp

- ◆ Any unstated and known symptoms or suspected communicable/infectious disease

DISCIPLINE

Discipline should be carried out through instruction, training, and correction in a fair, firm and consistent manner. Physical discipline will not be used by anyone other than the child's parents. For additional information please see the copy of the Child Protection Policy located at the child check-in kiosk.

LIST OF APPROVED WORKERS

The children's ministry coordinator will maintain and regularly update a list of approved workers for C&Y Ministries that shall be referenced prior to scheduling workers or making any substitutions.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY POLICY & PROCEDURES

GRADES 1 - 6

All staff and volunteer workers will adhere to the GFS Child Protection Policy at all times.

REGISTRATION

Proper written parental/guardian consent and medical release forms for minor's participation in all GFS Children and Youth (hereafter "C&Y") Ministry programs must be obtained and documented annually (All-Year Parental Consent and Waiver, Appendix B).

STAFFING RATIOS

When classrooms are open the Two Worker Rule (please see page 6) will be maintained at all times. During all GFS C&Y ministry programs, a ratio of one approved worker to no more than twenty-five (1:25) minors will be maintained.

AGE GUIDELINES

All youth assistants will be at least two years older than the oldest individual in the ministry with which they are working, with a minimum age of 13.

YOUTH ASSISTANT PRE-SCREENING GUIDELINES

A youth assistant may assist in GFS children's ministry programs as long as he/she is approved by the children's ministry coordinator and has completed a Ministry Application (Appendix A). He/She must be under the supervision of an approved adult worker and must not be left alone with minors.

CHECK IN/CHECK OUT

A parent/guardian will be required to check-in their child at the self check-in location before each service/program. Visitors or parents/guardians in need of assistance can see the check-in volunteer or children's ministry coordinator. A name tag for each child will be printed along with a pickup tag. The name tag should be affixed to the child's back before checking the child into the children's ministry, and the parent/guardian will keep the pickup tag. At the check-in counter the parent/guardian will be asked to leave appropriate instructions for the child's care, including cell phone number. A text will be sent to the parent's/guardian's cell phone if any

needs arise for the child. The pickup tag should be shown to the nursery room supervisor when picking up their child. Children should be picked up at the appropriate end time and should be picked up by a parent or guardian.

RESTROOM GUIDELINES

Parents are strongly encouraged to take their children to the restroom prior to class. For the protection of all, workers should never be alone with a child in a restroom with the door closed or in a closed restroom stall with a child. In the event that a child has to use the restroom during class, the teacher should contact the monitor to help the child get to and from the restroom. The monitor and child should use the restroom closest to the classroom.

EMERGENCY AND SICK CHILD PROCEDURES

In cases of emergency or sickness a worker will contact the children's ministry coordinator. The children's ministry coordinator will determine if the child's parent/guardian should be contacted to have their child removed from the classroom. Decisions about medical care will be left to the judgment of the parent/guardian.

Children with the following symptoms should NOT be dropped off:

- ◆ Nausea
- ◆ Diarrhea
- ◆ Vomiting
- ◆ Difficulty breathing
- ◆ Fever
- ◆ Runny nose with green or yellow discharge
- ◆ Lethargic demeanor
- ◆ Inability to participate in activities
- ◆ Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- ◆ Infected skin or eyes or an undiagnosed rash
- ◆ Severe itching of body or scalp
- ◆ Any unstated and known symptoms or suspected communicable/infectious disease

DISCIPLINE

Discipline should be carried out through instruction, training, and correction in a fair, firm and consistent manner. Physical discipline will not be used by anyone other than the child's parents. For additional

information please see the copy of the Child Protection Policy located at the child check-in kiosk.

LIST OF APPROVED WORKERS

The children’s ministry coordinator will maintain and regularly update a list of approved workers for C&Y Ministries that shall be referenced prior to scheduling workers or making any substitutions.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY POLICY & PROCEDURES

GRADES 7 – 12

All staff and volunteer workers will adhere to the GFS Child Protection Policy at all times.

REGISTRATION

Proper written parental/guardian consent and medical release forms for a minor's participation in all GFS Children and Youth (hereafter "C&Y") Ministry programs must be obtained and documented annually (All-Year Parental Consent and Waiver, Appendix B).

STAFFING RATIOS

When classrooms are open the Two Worker Rule (please see page 6) will be maintained at all times. A ratio of the following shall apply:

- ◆ Grades 7-8: One approved adult worker to no more than fifteen minors (1:15)
- ◆ Grades 9-12: One approved adult worker to no more than twenty minors (1:20)

One adult leader may meet with two or more unrelated high school students of the same sex in approved room space at GFS.

AGE GUIDELINES

All adult ministry workers will be at least three years older than the oldest student in the youth ministry and at least five years older than the oldest student in their small group. In the unlikely case of a youth assistant, they will be at least two years older than the oldest individual in the area of ministry they are serving.

YOUTH ASSISTANT PRE-SCREENING GUIDELINES

A high school student may assist in GFS middle school ministry programs in the event that he/she is approved by the ministry leader and has completed a Ministry Application (Appendix A). He/She must be under the supervision of an approved adult worker and must not be left alone with minors.

CHECK IN/CHECK OUT

All 7-12 grade students are required to check-in at the youth kiosk at the start of regular student ministry programs. Students serving in the children's ministry should check in at the self check-in location located in

the nursery hallway. If there are any questions or problems, please see the ministry leader at the mobile check-in station.

EMERGENCY AND SICK CHILD PROCEDURES

In cases of emergency or sickness an adult leader will contact the ministry leader. The ministry leader will determine if the child's parent/guardian should be contacted to have their child removed from the classroom/activity. Decisions about medical care will be left to the judgment of the parent/guardian.

TRANSPORTATION

All approved adult drivers for GFS youth programs must ensure that seat belts are worn by every individual traveling in their vehicle. Adult workers must have at least two minors in their vehicle. Males must travel with at least one other male; females must travel with at least one other female. For the protection of all, workers should never be alone in a car with a minor unless an exception has been granted by the Elders or designated authorities. Adult workers will obtain written permission (All-Year Parental Consent and Waiver, Appendix B) from a minor's parent/guardian before driving a minor.

CAMPS AND RETREATS

For all camps and retreats a parent/guardian must be notified at least one week in advance and sign an activity-specific medical release form (Activity Specific Medical Release, Appendix F).

SOCIAL NETWORKING

All workers will obtain written permission (Appendix B) from a minor's parent/guardian before interacting with the minor via social media, phone, or texting. Workers are encouraged to save copies of conversations, especially those concerning personal sharing of a minor.

LIST OF APPROVED WORKERS

The minister of youth will maintain and regularly update a list of approved workers for C&Y Ministries that shall be referenced prior to scheduling workers or making any substitutions.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY **APPENDIX PAGES**

*** Appendix pages are reduced.**

*For full-size forms, please refer to
CPP Binders located in each classroom.*

Appendix A

FOR PASTORAL STAFF USE ONLY	
Interview Date:	By:
CPP Trained Date:	By:
Ministry Trained: Nursery Children Student	

Children and Youth Ministry Application

Applicants for our Children and Youth Ministries will be considered after having attended Gospel Fellowship for a minimum of 6 months. What is the approximate date you began attending Gospel Fellowship?

Month Year

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Today's Date: _____

First Name: _____ Middle Initial: _____ Last Name: _____

List Other Names Used: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

How long have you lived at your current address? → **If less than 5 years, please provide a list of previous addresses on page 25 of this form.**

Full Date of Birth: / /

Cell Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____ Email: _____

Marital Status: Single Married – Name of Spouse: _____
 Divorced Widowed

Children's Names and Ages: _____

Have you had any Training? CPR First Aid

You do not need to be a member of Gospel Fellowship in order to serve, except in the position of *teacher*. Is there a specific area of ministry in which you are interested?

What makes you a good candidate for working with children and/or youth?

DRIVER'S INFORMATION <u>Include copy of DL with this application.</u>	
Only fill out if you are planning on transporting individuals for any church related events using any personal vehicles. You must be at least 21 years of age with a good driving record.	
D.L.:	State Issued:
Driver's Insurance Company Name: _____	
Have you had any accidents in the last three years? No Yes, please explain:	
Have you had any tickets in the last three years? No Yes, please explain:	

CHRISTIAN WALK AND BACKGROUND

How long have you been a Christian?

Why do you call yourself a Christian?

How do you know you are going to Heaven?

Briefly describe the definition of a Christian?

Describe how God changed your life.

Are you familiar with the beliefs and doctrines of Gospel Fellowship of Sussex?

If so, do you agree with these beliefs and doctrines?

Are there any doctrines or practices that you question? Please explain:

REFERENCES (ONE REFERENCE SHOULD BE A GFS MINISTRY LEADER)

Name:

Name:

Address:

Address:

Phone:

Phone:

Email:

Email:

- I have read and understand the Gospel Fellowship of Sussex Child Protection Policy (CPP).
- In order to serve in the Children/Youth Ministry I agree to attend an annual training/ review and abide by the guidelines as laid out in the policy.
- I have never been incarcerated for or engaged in any type of physical or sexual abuse of a child.
- I will disclose any such accusations to the Elders and seek their permission to participate in this ministry.

I authorize any reference or churches to give you any information (including opinions) that they may have regarding my character and fitness for this ministry. In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of my application by Gospel Fellowship of Sussex, I hereby release GFS and its agents, employees, volunteers and chaperones from any and all damages or injury arising out of or related to this application, including but not limited to defamation actions, employment actions, intentional infliction of emotional distress, breach of duty, invasion of privacy, or arising out of or related to the disclosure of any information or rendering of any opinion given under this authorization, whether under statute or common law, to the fullest extent allowed by law.

Applicant's Signature:

Date:

Appendix B

All-Year Parental Consent and Waiver

September 2019 – September 2020

(This form does not supersede nor take the place of any church policy.)

Gospel Fellowship of Sussex (GFS) welcomes your child's participation in the Children and Youth Ministries ("C&YM"). It is necessary, however, for GFS and you to have an understanding regarding GFS's responsibility and your responsibility in the event of an accident or illness involving any participant in the C&YM. It is also important for you to comply with anticipated relational connections that often arise in ministry between approved adult workers and minors. We, therefore, ask you to read and agree to the following terms and conditions:

I hereby give permission for _____

List ALL names of children under age 18 participating in any programs or activities.

to participate in the C&YM at GFS. I understand and agree that GFS and its agents, employees, volunteers and chaperones shall not be liable for any injury death, damages, or personal injury arising out of or related to the C&YM activities, including but not limited to games, sports, gymnasium activities, use of the GFS facilities, and transportation.

In the event that my child needs to take a prescription or non-prescription medication while participating, I give my child permission to use this medication. ALL medications, prescription or non-prescription, must be carried in the original labeled container. Prescription medications must be listed on the back of this form unless prescribed by a medical professional during any emergency.

Also, in case of an emergency, I hereby give my consent for a qualified physician to perform any medical or surgical procedures he/she deems necessary to the welfare of my child. It is also understood that the staff or chaperones and medical personnel will make every attempt to contact parents, guardians, or relatives listed below when taking any such actions. Further, this authorization permits said physician to hospitalize, secure appropriate consultation, order injections, anesthesia (local, general or both) or surgery for my child if such emergency conditions warrant.

In addition, if a licensed physician is asked to provide medical care, I authorize this physician to examine and treat my child for general medical problems of a non-emergency nature (cold, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, insect bites, heat exhaustions, etc.) that may arise while participating.

PLEASE PRINT Parent/Guardian Information

FIRST _____ LAST _____ Parent E-mail _____

Home Address _____ City, State, Zip _____

Cell #: _____ Cell Carrier/Service Provider _____

Home #: _____

Preferred Contact #? (check one)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cell #	<input type="checkbox"/> Home #

Emergency Contact Name: _____

Emergency Contact Phone #: _____

Consent Definitions

Image: Permission for a photo/video that includes child to be published on the GFS website, newsletter, bulletin, Facebook page, or other social media outlets and publications.

Social Media: Permission for child to interact with approved adult GFS volunteers via social media and phone conversation, including text and Facebook messaging, email, and cell phone usage.

Transportation: Permission for child to ride in vehicles with approved adult GFS volunteers who have been given clearance to transport minors via personal vehicles.

Counseling: Permission for child to be involved in a counseling or discipleship setting in which a same-gender approved adult GFS volunteer may have a private conversation.

CONSENT (see definitions above)

PLEASE PRINT Child(ren) Information

By checking the boxes below you grant permission for the following:

1. Image Social Media First _____ Last _____
 Transportation Counseling Student Date of Birth _____ Student School _____ Grade _____

2. Image Social Media First _____ Last _____
 Transportation Counseling Student Date of Birth _____ Student School _____ Grade _____

3. Image Social Media First _____ Last _____
 Transportation Counseling Student Date of Birth _____ Student School _____ Grade _____

4. Image Social Media First _____ Last _____
 Transportation Counseling Student Date of Birth _____ Student School _____ Grade _____

Have any of your children been diagnosed with a chronic disease that requires daily management such as diabetes, AIDS, HIV, hepatitis? If yes, please list name(s) here:

Are there any other concerns we should be aware of? (special medications; allergies; custody issues; physical, mental or learning challenges, etc.): If yes, please list child(s) names and concerns:

List approved prescription medications for each child:

Family Doctor Name _____ Doctor Phone _____

Insurance Company _____ Group # _____ Policy # _____

I have read and understand the above provisions and it is my intention that by signing below I will bind myself and the participant to the terms stated above.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

Appendix C

Limited Access Agreement

Gospel Fellowship of Sussex has reason for concern that your contact with children and youth (hereafter c&y) in our congregation places you and them at risk of accusation or incident. The following guidelines are designed to reduce risk of the same. We welcome you to GFS, but your participation will be limited to ensure the safety of our c&y and to ensure that you will not be subject to future accusations. Within these guidelines, the congregation welcomes your participation in adult worship services, adult education, adult social events, and/or _____.

1. You are to avoid all contact with minors on GFS property or GFS-sponsored events:
 - A. You may attend but please do not talk with minors or agree to lead, chaperone, transport, or participate in any c&y activities, classes, or intergenerational events.
 - B. If a minor in the congregation approaches you, either at church or in public, politely and immediately excuse yourself from the situation.
 - C. Please note, this agreement also applies to adults with special needs.
2. You will be asked to sign a Consent, Authorization and Release form to be sent to applicable professionals with whom you work, including but not limited to your parole officer and therapist.
3. Five GFS members will be assigned to you as “covenant partners” for the purpose of accountability, support, and supervision (see back). Please remain in the presence of a covenant partner at all times while on GFS property as well as at any GFS-sponsored activities on or off-site.
4. You accept that the Elders of GFS, the Child Protection Committee, and covenant partners will be told of your circumstances in order to protect c&y at GFS, as well as the following, if applicable:

5. You may not possess or borrow a key to GFS at any time nor use GFS computers.
6. You understand this contract will be reviewed/updated as needed and remain in place as long as you attend any allowed functions at GFS, unless the Elders make a written finding to the contrary.

Other Restrictions, Amendments, and/or Notes:

*Please note: The Elders may deny a person convicted of a sexual offense access to GFS if they are found to be in violation of the Limited Access Agreement or at high risk of recidivism, or in their sole discretion for any reason.

*Signatures on next page must be attached.

Appendix D

Consent, Authorization, and Release

Name: _____ Social Security No.: _____

Date of Birth: _____

I have requested access to the property and/or activities of Gospel Fellowship of Sussex ("GFS"), and, in GFS's discretion, it has required me to sign and abide by the GFS Limited Access Agreement ("LAA"), which is incorporated by reference into this Consent, Authorization, and Release (this "Consent"). I understand that GFS would not enter into the LAA with me if I did not agree to the terms in this Consent.

1. As the above-named individual, I authorize the disclosure and use of my medical records (including those related to treatment by therapists, psychologists, or other mental health professionals) parole, probationary and court records (even if expunged/under seal), and any related records (the "Records and Information").
2. I understand that individuals or organizations which GFS may ask to disclose the Records and Information may require me to execute further authorizations in order to release them, and I agree to promptly execute these further authorizations. If I do not GFS has the right to immediately revoke the LAA.
3. I understand that the information in my Records and Information may also include information about behavioral or mental health services, and treatment for alcohol and drug abuse, and may disclose information relating to sexually transmitted disease, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), or human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).
5. This Records and Information may be disclosed to and used by GFS and its employees and staff for purposes of evaluating, monitoring, and reducing risk of incident.
6. I understand I have the right to revoke this Consent at any time. I understand if I revoke my Consent, I must do so in writing and present my written revocation to a GFS Elder. I understand the revocation will not apply to information that has already been released in response to this Consent. Unless otherwise revoked, this Consent will expire in one (1) year from the date below. I understand that revoking my consent will automatically result in a revocation of the LAA.
7. I understand that authorizing the disclosure of the Records and Information is voluntary. I can refuse to sign this Consent. I understand any disclosure of Records and Information carries with it the potential for unauthorized re-disclosure and the information may not be protected by federal confidentiality rules.
8. I hereby release GFS and its agents, employees, volunteers and chaperones from any and all claims, damages or injury arising out of or related to this Consent, including but not limited to defamation actions, employment actions, intentional infliction of emotional distress, breach of duty, invasion of privacy, or arising out of or related to the disclosure of any Records or Information or rendering of any opinion given under this authorization, whether under Wisconsin or federal statute, regulation, or common law, to the fullest extent allowed by law.

By:

Name:

Date:

Appendix E

Incident Report

Minor's Name and Age: _____

Date of Incident: _____

Description of Incident: _____

Action Taken: _____

Adult Witness: _____

Address & Phone # of Witness: _____

Other Witnesses: _____

Parent Notification: Yes ___ No ___ / Date & Time: _____

Call to WI WCFS/Law Enforcement: Yes ___ No ___ / Date & Time: _____

Notes of All Interactions: _____

Signature of Person Completing Form

Position

Date

Appendix F

Activity Medical Information and Release

Please complete this form as clearly and accurately as possible. This information is needed so that staff/chaperones can be informed of special needs and medical conditions to ensure the health of each child. This information will be held in the strictest confidentiality.

PLEASE PRINT

Child's Name_____	Date of Birth _____
Parent's / Guardian's Name_____	Person to Contact in Case of Emergency: _____
Address_____	Emergency Phone _____
City , State, Zip_____	Family Physician_____
Home Phone_____	Physician Phone_____
Parent's / Guardian's Work Phone (s) _____	Insurance Company & Policy Holder _____
Parent's / Guardian's Work Phone(s) _____	Policy Number_____

MEDICATIONS (CURRENTLY TAKING)

Name of Medications (include dosage/frequency):

Date of last Tetanus shot:

Allergies/allergic reactions to medications:

Major surgery:

Acute or chronic medical conditions:

Physical conditions that may limit activity:

Special dietary needs:

PARENTAL CONSENT /RESPONSIBILITY CLAUSE/MEDICAL PERMIT

PLEASE FILL OUT COMPLETELY

I hereby give permission for _____ to participate in the _____ (name of event). I understand and agree that GFS, and its agents, employees, volunteers and chaperones shall not be liable for any injury, death, damages, or personal injury, arising out of related to the C&YM activities, including but not limited to games, sports, gymnasium activities, use of the GFS facilities, and transportation, whether said damage or injury is caused through negligence, any action or inaction, to the fullest extent allowed by law.

In the event that my child needs to take a prescription or non-prescription medication while participating, I give my child permission to use this medication. ALL medications, prescription or non-prescription, must be carried in the original labeled container. Prescription medications must be listed on the medical consent permit unless prescribed by a medical professional during any emergency.

Also, in case of emergency, I hereby give my consent for a qualified physician to perform any medical or surgical procedures he/she deems necessary to the welfare of my child. It is also understood that the staff or chaperones and medical personnel will make every attempt to contact parents, guardians, or relatives listed above when taking any such actions. Further, this authorization permits said physician to hospitalize, secure appropriate consultation, order injections, anesthesia (local, general or both) or surgery for my child if such emergency conditions warrant.

In addition, if a licensed physician is asked to provide medical care, I authorize this physician to examine and treat my child for general medical problems of a non-emergency nature (cold, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, insect bites, heat exhaustions, etc) that may arise while participating.

Signature of parent or guardian

Relationship to child

Date

Appendix G

Policy for Any Transportation of Youth for Any Church Related Event

Staffing

- a. There will always be two Gospel Fellowship of Sussex approved adult volunteers in the vehicle when driving children to and from events. One of the adults (driver or passenger) must be a female unless an exception is granted by the Elders.
 - i. One GFS approved driver will drive the vehicle.
 - ii. Substitute drivers and monitors will be recruited to be contacted in the event that the primary driver and/or monitor is or are not available.
- b. The driver and the monitor should plan to meet at GFS with the rest of the children, unless an exception is granted by the Elders.

GOSPEL
FELLOWSHIP
OF SUSSEX

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