

## **Caring for Children**

At Lansdale Presbyterian Church (LPC) we care for the families God has entrusted to us. For this reason we have adopted policies, procedures, and clear standards to help insure that each child who participates in our ministries will have a positive and safe experience.

LPC depends on both paid and volunteer workers to oversee our ministries and we will strive to ensure quality, responsible, and ethical leaders to minister to our children and youth.

Child sexual abuse violates the law of God. It is breaking the seventh commandment, and it takes advantage of those who are weak and defenseless. God calls the Church to defend the cause of the weak, to rescue the weak and needy, and to deliver them from the hand of the wicked. (Psalm 82:3,4)

Child sexual abuse is criminal behavior as stated in the Child Protective Services Law, 23 PA.C.S.A. & 6303(b)(1) and will be reported to the appropriate civil authorities.

## **Policies & Procedures**

The following is a summary of the Lansdale Presbyterian Church Policies and Procedures Concerning Child Safety. A full copy of this document is available at the church office on request.

## **Background Checks**

All paid employees must complete a national criminal background check (including PA Criminal Record check and PA Sex Offender Registry check).

All paid employees must have their personal references verified before employment.

All volunteers that work with children/youth in a one on one counseling setting or go on overnight activities with children/youth must complete a national criminal background check (including PA Criminal Record check and PA Sex Offender Registry check).

## **Open Visibility**

All interaction with children and youth is to take place in an open setting visible to other responsible adults. In settings where open visibility can not be ensured more than one adult will always accompany children and youth.

### **Six Month Rule**

All volunteers having unsupervised contact with children or youth must be involved with the church for at least six months and must be approved by the Board of Christian Education as a volunteer.

### **Activity Supervision**

All children and youth activities (whether on or off church premises) are to be supervised by the appropriate number of paid staff or volunteer workers. The number of supervisors will increase in keeping with the attendance and risk level associated with the activity.

### **Teen Helpers**

Teen Helpers between the ages of 12 and under the age of 18 are not authorized to take the place of an adult in supervisory care. Teen Helpers are encouraged to assist adults with supervising children and youth whenever possible and appropriate.

### **Release Policy**

Children under First Grade will not be released by a teacher or nursery worker to anyone not authorized by the child's parent or guardian.

### **Parental Permission**

Parental permission is required for all children involved in programs and activities operated by LPC. Specific written parental permission may be required for events depending on the activity.

### **Displays of Affection**

LPC recognizes that expressions of affection are vital to building warm, healthy relationships. Appropriate touching and hugging is only permitted in the presence of other adults and in an open area.

### **Discipline**

LPC recognizes that safe and orderly group and classroom environments require appropriate discipline. Each group or class will be governed by a group or class covenant. Classroom discipline will follow the Classroom Discipline and Management Policy established by the LPC Board of Christian Education. Classroom covenants will be posted in each classroom and made available to parents on request to the church office.