



It's Our 50th Anniversary – Remember Rejoice Renew

St. Catherine's Episcopal Church & Preschool

Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse

Adopted and approved by the Vestry
September 20, 2011

Adopted and approved by the Preschool Board
October 19, 2011

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Table of Contents

Preamble & Code of Conduct

General Definitions

Safeguards for Children & Youth

 Screening and Selection

 Education and Training

 Interacting with Children and Youth

 Guidelines for Appropriate Affection

 Monitoring, Supervision & Accountability

Guidelines for Specific Programs

Responding to Problems

 Reporting Inappropriate Behavior

 Reporting Suspected Abuse

Code of Conduct & Acknowledgement Statement

Appendices:

A. Mentoring Program

B. Youth Mentoring Program Guidelines

C. Youth Mentoring Program: Contact Record Sheet

D. Youth Mentoring Program: Supervision Meeting Check-in Form

E. Leadership Matrix

F. Application Form for Church and Preschool Employees

G. Volunteer Application Form

H. Letter of Consent for References

I. Confidential Notice of Concern

J. Mandatory Reporting Laws

Preamble

Relationships among people are at the foundation of Christian ministry and as such are central to the life of the church. Defining healthy and safe relationships through policies and codes of conduct is not meant, in any way, to undermine the strength and importance of personal interaction in our ministries. Rather, it is to assist in more clearly defining behaviors and practices that allow the church to more fully demonstrate its love and compassion for children and youth in sincere and genuine relationships.

Relationships in ministry should, ideally, always be experienced as caring and without intention to do harm or allow harm to occur. The following **Code of Conduct** has been adopted by the Rector and Vestry of St. Catherine's Episcopal Church and the Board of Directors of St. Catherine's Preschool to help the church and preschool create safe environments for children and youth and for those who minister to them. All Church and Preschool personnel are asked to carefully consider each statement in the Code and within the Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse before agreeing to adhere to the statements and continue in service to the church and preschool.

The attached Leadership Matrix (Appendix E) defines the requirements for each position working with children and youth at St. Catherine's Episcopal Church and Preschool and by its inclusion becomes a part of these Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse.

Code of Conduct for Protection of Children and Youth

- Church Personnel agree to do their best to prevent abuse and neglect among children and youth involved in church activities and services.
- Church Personnel agree to not physically, sexually or emotionally abuse or neglect a child or youth.
- Church Personnel agree to comply with the policies for general conduct with children and youth as defined in these Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse.
- Church Personnel agree to immediately report their observations in the event they observe any inappropriate behaviors or possible policy violations with children or youth.
- Church Personnel acknowledge their 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 in accordance with these policies.
- Church Personnel understand that the church/preschool will not tolerate abuse of children and youth and agree to comply in spirit and in action with this position.

General Definitions

- A. **CHURCH PERSONNEL.** For the purposes of this policy, the following are included in the definition of Church Personnel when they are functioning in their respective roles for the church:
1. All clergy whether stipendiary, non-stipendiary, or otherwise who are engaged in ministry or service to the church or preschool.
 2. All St. Catherine's Preschool paid personnel.
 3. Those that contract their services to the parish or preschool including afterschool programs.
 4. Volunteers, including any person who enters into or offers him or herself for a church or preschool related service, or who actually assists with or performs a service, whether or not they have been selected or assigned to do so. Volunteers include members of the Vestry, Ministry Teams, and the Preschool Boards of Directors.
 5. All paid personnel whether employed in areas of ministry, preschool operations, or other kinds of services by the parish and preschool.
- B. **CHILDREN AND YOUTH.** A child is defined as anyone under the age of 12 years. A youth is defined as anyone who is at least 12 years old, but not yet 18 years old. A youth may also be an individual who is 18 years old or older, but still in high school.
- C. **CHURCH PERSONNEL WHO REGULARLY WORK WITH OR AROUND CHILDREN OR YOUTH** (For the purpose of this policy, the following are included in this definition)
1. All clergy whether stipendiary, non-stipendiary, or otherwise who are engaged in ministry or service to the church and preschool.
 2. All paid or volunteer Church Personnel whose work regularly takes them throughout the facility or grounds or who have keys giving them access to the buildings on the grounds.
 3. All persons who supervise or assist with supervising children or youth, in ministries, programs or activities more often than occasionally.
 4. All persons who provide transportation to children or youth without other adults in the vehicle more often than occasionally.
 5. All Vestry members and Preschool Board of Directors or other members of similar decision-making groups who have the authority to approve the creation of ministries, programs or activities for children or youth.

Examples of Church Personnel who REGULARLY WORK WITH OR AROUND CHILDREN OR YOUTH include, but are not limited to:

- Church school teachers, catechists and assistants
- Children's or youth choir directors or organists who work with children or youth
- Lay youth ministers
- Volunteer youth directors and Acolyte directors
- All Church Personnel who work or assist in the nursery more than four times a year
- All Church Personnel who work in the nursery if they are the only person over 18 present at any time
- All staff at church camps whether volunteer or paid
- Adults who participate in overnight activities with children or youth more than twice a year.

D. CHURCH PERSONNEL WHO OCCASIONALLY WORK WITH OR AROUND CHILDREN OR YOUTH For the purpose of this policy, the following are included in the definition:

- All persons who supervise, or assist with supervising, children or youth in ministries, programs or activities infrequently, generally no more than three times a year or for one program or activity during a year that lasts less than a month (i.e. assisting with preparation for the Christmas pageant, VBS, or teaching one "unit" of Church School for a month).
- All persons who provide transportation to children or youth without other adults in the vehicle infrequently, generally no more than three times a year.
- All persons who work or assist in the nursery four or fewer times a year, whether on an emergency basis or otherwise.
- Adults who participate in overnight activities with children or youth once or twice a year.

E. TYPES OF ABUSE

1. **Physical Abuse** is non-accidental injury, which is intentionally inflicted upon a child or youth.
2. **Sexual Abuse Perpetrated by an Adult** is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a child or youth and an adult. This includes any activity, which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of the adult, child or youth.
3. **Sexual Abuse Perpetrated by Another Child or Youth** is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a child or youth and another child or youth when there is no consent, when consent is not possible, or when one child or youth has power over the other child or youth. This includes any activity which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of any of the children or youth.
4. **Emotional Abuse** is mental or emotional injury to a child or youth that results in an observable and material impairment in the child or youth's growth, development or psychological functioning.
5. **Neglect** is the failure to provide for a child or youth's basic needs or the failure to protect a child or youth from harm.
6. **Economic Exploitation** is the deliberate misplacement, exploitation, or wrongful temporary or permanent use of a child or youth's belongings or money.

Safeguards for Children and Youth

A. SCREENING AND SELECTION

1. Any and all Church Personnel who **Regularly Work With or Around Children or Youth** shall be screened and selected utilizing at least the following:

- A standard application completed by the applicant that includes an authorization for the release of information to conduct background checks and the Code of Conduct.
- Sexual Offender registry check at the National Sex Offender Public Website (www.nsopw.gov), or similar resource, in any state where the applicant has resided during the past seven years.
- An individual interview with the applicant.
- Reference checks of persons outside the congregation who know the applicant, preferably who know how the applicant works with children.
- Driving or Motor Vehicle records in the event the person may be transporting children or youth, other than their own.

2. Any and all Church Personnel who **Occasionally Work With or Around Children or Youth** shall be screened and selected utilizing at least the following:

- A standard application completed by the applicant that includes an authorization for the release of information to conduct background checks and the Code of Conduct.
- Sexual Offender Registry Check at the National Sex Offender Public Website (www.nsopw.gov), or similar resource, in any state where the applicant has resided during the past seven years.
- An individual interview with the applicant
- At least one reference check of a person or persons outside the congregation or preschool who know the applicant, preferably who know how the applicant interacts with children.
- Driving or Motor Vehicle Records check if the person will be transporting children or youth, other than their own.

All information gathered about an applicant will be carefully reviewed and evaluated to make a determination, in consultation with others as necessary, of whether or not the person is appropriate to work with children or youth.

3. Church Personnel who work with or around children or youth will have a personnel file that is kept where other secure church or preschool records are kept.

4. All volunteer leaders of parish or preschool programs involving children and youth must be members or regular attendees of St. Catherine's Episcopal Church for at least six months or immediate family members of preschool students. These program leaders must be approved by the Christian Nurture & Development Committee before working with children and youth at St. Catherine's Church or by the Preschool Director for programs in the Preschool. The Rector has the right to refuse any person from working with children and youth.

5. Criminal records checks and sexual offender registry checks are conducted every five years for Church Personnel who Regularly Work with or Around Children or Youth (optional for Church School Teachers, Catechists and Assistants).

6. To the extent possible, it is recommended that persons not be permitted to supervise an immediate family member when working with or around children or youth (for instance a nursery director supervising her 16-year-old daughter assisting in the nursery). For the purpose of this policy, immediate family member is defined as spouse, partner, child, parent, sister, brother, similar in-law relationship, stepchild, stepparent, step sibling, grandparent, or cohabitant.

7. Church Personnel who transfer within the Diocese of Atlanta and apply for, or are asked to undertake, a position working with or around children or youth, are required to undergo the same screening and selection process in Section A above. This requirement may be met through a transfer of a copy of their personnel file to St. Catherine's Episcopal Church and Preschool, together with completion of a new application, individual interview and reference checks with the congregations, schools, agencies or other programs for which the applicant has worked with or around children or youth since the screening was last done, as shown in the applicant's personnel file.

B. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

1. Three hours of in person child abuse prevention education and training is required for all **Church Personnel Who Regularly Work With Children or Youth** before they start their work with children or youth or, if that is not possible, one hour of child abuse awareness training before they start their work and the rest of the training within three months of starting.

2. One hour of child abuse awareness education and training is required for all **Church Personnel Who Occasionally Work With Children or Youth** before they start their work with children or youth.

3. We will accept the Georgia Professional Standards Commission training with the following expectations:

- a current copy of your certification will be kept on file here at St. Catherine's and,
- the certification will be kept current on whatever frequency demanded by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, provided such frequency is three years or less;
- completion of two modules of Safeguarding God's Children online training to include *Your Policies* and *Abuse Risk Management for Volunteers*

4. Church Personnel who are responsible for screening, selection and supervision of others in programs for children & youth are required to complete an additional three hours of specialized training in screening, selection and monitoring from the Diocese of Atlanta, as available.

5. To maintain certification, Church Personnel will complete updated child abuse prevention training or education in related fields every three years. This training may occur online at the discretion of the Rector but must include one hour of in-person review and completion of the online training modules. All personnel will review the Code of Conduct & Guidelines for Appropriate Affection annually.

6. The person responsible for children and youth ministries or a person appointed by the rector or the Vestry shall audit the certification files annually so that current certification is maintained.

C. INTERACTING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The Diocese of Atlanta and St. Catherine's Episcopal Church and Preschool are committed to creating and promoting a positive, nurturing environment for our children and youth ministries that protects our children and youth from abuse and our Church Personnel 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 and Preschool personnel to comfortably show positive affection in ministry, and yet identify individuals who are not maintaining safe boundaries with children or youth

The following **Guidelines for Appropriate Affection** are to be carefully followed by **all** Church and Preschool Personnel working around or with children or youth.

Positive and Appropriate forms of affection:

- 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).

The following forms of affection are considered inappropriate with children and youth in a ministry setting because many of them are the behaviors that child molesters use to groom children, youth and their parents for later molestation, or they can be, in and of themselves, sexual abuse.

Inappropriate forms of affection:

- 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.

Discipline establishes clear expectations and provides rewards and incentives for acceptable behavior. Discipline should be done lovingly and with kindness. The goal is that of helping children develop a sense of responsibility and self-control.

Appropriate Discipline:

- Verbal disapproval
- Loss of privileges
- Redirection- to teach children acceptable behavior.

Inappropriate Discipline:

Corporal punishment of any kind within the church is unacceptable.

Corporal punishment includes but is not limited to:

- slapping
- spanking
- pinching and/or shaking.
- punitive techniques that cause physical pain such as assuming an uncomfortable position are not appropriate.
- physical restraint of children should be used only when someone's safety is at risk.
- derogatory remarks or comments (spoken, written, or electronic) that humiliate or frighten the child shall not be used.

C. MONITORING, SUPERVISION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The monitoring and supervision of programs and activities involving children or youth is important for safeguarding children and youth and involves several aspects. One aspect involves having structural guidelines or standards for the programs and activities, such as who approves new programs, how many adults need to be present and the like. In order that structural safeguards are followed, programs and activities have to be monitored and supervised.

Another aspect is that supervisory personnel and others monitor and supervise the behavior of adults, youth and other children so that inappropriate behaviors and interactions can be detected and stopped. Some behaviors are a danger to children such as offering them alcohol. Others are behaviors known to be used by molesters in 'grooming' children.

Structural Guidelines

1. These guidelines are goals given with the expectation that best judgment will prevail when it comes to the safety, protection and well being of our children and youth. The church recognizes that in some circumstances achieving these guidelines may not be attainable.

2. Two workers will be present at all times when working with children and youth. Church Personnel may not be alone with a child or youth or multiple children or youth unless other adults can easily observe them.
3. Adult Church Personnel must directly supervise Church Personnel under the age of 18 and be physically present during all activities. Minors (15-18) may help adults lead youth activities only under the direct leadership of adults. An older child or youth may not be used to meet ratio guidelines discussed above.
4. When at all possible, it is recommended that at least two unrelated Church Personnel supervise activities; on overnight trips, male and female adult supervision is mandatory with boys and girls in attendance.
5. When supervising or assisting private activities such as dressing or diapering infants or children, Church Personnel must remain in an area observable by other adults or work in pairs.
6. St. Catherine's Parish and Preschool computers should have adequate password protection.
7. St. Catherine's Parish and Preschool should have clear guidelines and adequate supervision by authorized persons of anyone using a Parish or Preschool computer to access the internet. Any activity on a Parish or Preschool computer is not considered private and may be accessed by authorized persons.
8. St. Catherine's Parish and Preschool will conduct a 'safe church audit' annually to review practices and policies within the congregation and preschool.

General Conduct

These guidelines are not designed or intended to address interactions within families. When exceptions to these guidelines must be made, the exception is reported to the supervisor of the Church Personnel making the exception as soon as possible.

1. All Church Personnel who work with children or youth must agree to comply with St. Catherine's Guidelines for Appropriate Affection and have completed and signed the Compliance Agreement Form.
2. Church Personnel are prohibited from the use, possession, distribution, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or the misuse of legal drugs while participating in or assisting with programs or activities specifically for children or youth.
3. Parents or guardians complete written permission forms before Church Personnel transport children and youth for a church or preschool sponsored activity or for any purpose on more than an occasional basis.
4. Church Personnel respond to children and youth with respect, consideration and equal treatment, regardless, of sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, culture or socio-economic status.
5. Church Personnel portray a positive role model for children and youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, patience, and maturity. They avoid even the appearance of favoritism.
6. One-to-one counseling with children or youth will be done in an open or public or other place where private conversations are possible but occur in full view of others.

7. Church Personnel are prohibited from dating or becoming romantically involved with a child or youth.
8. Church Personnel are prohibited from having sexual contact with a child or youth.
9. Church Personnel are prohibited from possessing any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing etc.) on church property or in the presence of children or youth except as expressly permitted as part of a pre-authorized educational program.
10. Church Personnel are prohibited from using the Internet to view or download any sexually oriented materials on church property or in the presence of children or youth.
11. Church Personnel are prohibited from having any contact of a sexual nature with children or youth using social media such as texting, Twitter, Facebook, or other social media. The use of these forms of communication for what is considered normal Church or Preschool business, programming, and pastoral care and support is allowed.
12. Church Personnel are prohibited from discussing their own sexual activities, including dreams and fantasies, or discussing their use of sexually oriented or explicit materials such as pornography, videos or materials on or from the Internet, with children or youth.
13. Church Personnel are prohibited from sleeping in the same beds, sleeping bags, tents, hotel rooms or other rooms with children or youth unless the adult is an immediate family member of all children or youth in the bed, sleeping bag, tent, hotel room or other room. It is acceptable to have multiple adults sleep with all the children or youth participating in one open space such as a church basement or camp lodge.
14. Church Personnel are prohibited from dressing, undressing, bathing, or showering in the presence of children or youth.
15. Church Personnel are prohibited from participating in or allowing others to conduct any hazing activities relating to children's or youth ministry or camp activities.
16. Church Personnel are prohibited from using harsh language, degrading punishment, or mechanical restraint such as rope or tape for behavior management.
17. St. Catherine's acknowledges that informal contact between adult youth worker and youth does occur. For example, youth workers may hire teens as baby sitters for their own children, or youth workers may see kids during social events with the child's family. This interaction is usually legitimate and beneficial. However, youth workers should seek permission of the parents before having informal contact with their youth. The youth worker should clearly let the parent know the nature of the contact, and that it is *not* part of church activity. Parents are responsible for monitoring this informal contact.
18. All personnel should be vigilant so that questionable situations do not arise

Accountability

1. Children's ministries and youth leaders will seek volunteers in sufficient numbers to allow staffing of the programs as stated above.

2. Communication and explanation of this policy will be included annually in all training and orientation programs for Christian Nurture & Development volunteers, as well as other appropriate times during the year.
3. Communication and explanation of this policy will be included annually in all training and orientation programs for St. Catherine's Preschool staff and volunteers, as well as during regular training events and staff meetings.
4. Written information about this policy shall be sent to all Church members and Preschool parents and posted in the Church and Preschool offices. Mention of this policy will be included in new member orientation classes and other regular communication vehicles of the Church and Preschool.
5. An up-to-date list of approved congregation-sponsored/Preschool provided programs for children and youth will be maintained in the Church and Preschool offices or other places where Church and Preschool records are kept.
6. Church Personnel are not permitted to develop new activities for children and youth without approval from the Rector and Vestry or in the case of the Preschool, the Preschool Director and Board of Directors. Requests to develop new activities should be submitted in writing to the Rector and Vestry and the Preschool Director and Board of Directors, respectively. The Rector and Vestry or Preschool Director and Board of Directors will consider whether the plan for a new activity includes adequate adult supervision.

Guidelines for Specific Programs

NURSERY STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

All nursery staff and volunteers are to follow the Monitoring, Supervision and Accountability Guidelines in addition to the following specific guidelines:

- Parents are to sign in their child upon arrival.
- The Nursery does have an open door policy. This means that workers, parents, and church members have a right to visit the nursery; however, children will only be released to a parent or the person designated by the parent.

BATHROOM POLICIES

- Young children (1 1/2-6 years) should be accompanied to the restroom.
- Other Church Personnel should be made aware that an adult is taking a child [children] to the bathroom
- Children should have privacy in the stall unless they are in need of assistance, in which case the adult should leave the door ajar and request the presence of another adult.

OTHER POLICIES REGARDING CHILDREN

All Church and Preschool volunteers are to follow the Monitoring, Supervision and Accountability guidelines.

1. **Field Trip Permission Form** A form for each child must be completed and signed before the child will be allowed to participate in a field trip. This form is to be kept with the adult

worker at all times during the field trip. On any overnight field trip, the gender of the adults must reflect the the gender of the children on the activity.

2. Transportation as a Part of Church Programs -- The Church or Preschool may from time to time provide transportation as an official part of Church or Preschool activities. For example, the church may provide transportation to out-of-town events or field trips. When youth are transported as a part of these activities, all guidelines will apply.

3. Auto Safety -- Persons who drive vehicles for conducting Church or Preschool business or transporting children and or youth must be 21 years of age, be insured, have and use the appropriate number of seat belts and have a valid driver's license. Persons who drive children or youth on a regular basis must also have a clear Department of Motor Vehicle records check on file in the church office.

4. Confidentiality – All Church Personnel must follow the highest standards of confidentiality when working with children and youth. Parents must be confident that stories about their children are not going to be repeated inside or outside the Church or Preschool setting. When reporting actions of a child to a parent, the worker should not name another child by name but instead use language such as "another child", "classmate", etc.

Responding to Problems

REPORTING INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS OR POLICY VIOLATIONS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

1. When Church Personnel observe any inappropriate behaviors, behaviors that are inconsistent with the Guidelines for Appropriate Affection, or which may violate any provision of these *Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse*, they must immediately report their observations.

2. Such inappropriate behaviors or possible policy violations that relate to interactions with children or youth should be reported in one of the following ways:

- a. A telephone call or meeting with the immediate supervisor of the person,
- b. A telephone call or meeting with the rector, if the person is not the rector;
- c. A telephone call or meeting with a church warden if the person is the rector;
- d. A telephone call, meeting or email to the Intake Officer in the Bishop's Office
- e. Submit a *Confidential Notice of Concern* (Appendix I), signed or unsigned to the Intake Officer in the Bishop's office, The Rev. Canon Richard Callaway, 404-601-5320 or email him at rcallaway@episcopalatlanta.org.

Effective September 15, 2011, the Diocesan Intake Officer will be The Rev. Canon Alicia Schuster Weltner, 404-601-5320 x 123 or aschusterweltner@episcopalatlanta.org. Mail to Canon Alicia Schuster Weltner, Diocese of Atlanta, 2744 Peachtree Rd. NW, Atlanta GA 30305.

All reports of inappropriate behavior or policy violations with children or youth will be taken seriously by St. Catherine's Episcopal Church and Preschool and the Diocese of Atlanta.

REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE OF CHILDREN OR YOUTH

As of July 1, 2012, all Church Personnel are considered “Mandated Reporters” and are required by this policy and by Georgia Law, to report known or suspected abuse of children or youth to the appropriate state authorities.

1. By Georgia law, an oral report shall be made immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused, by telephone or otherwise and followed by a report in writing, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Services, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney. A report to the Rector or other Clergy person in charge of a parish may constitute fulfilling the above, providing that the clergy person follows through with the reporting within the 24 hour period and that no changes are made in the report itself
(See Appendix C).

After hours centralized intake: 1-855-GA CHILD (422-4453), 5pm- 8am weekdays / 24 hours on weekends – holidays / furlough days.

2. Failure to report suspected abuse of children or youth may be a crime. Reports may be made confidentially or anonymously. Every state provides immunity from civil liability for persons required to report suspected abuse in good faith and without malice. Simply stated, "in good faith" means that the person submitting the report believes what he or she is reporting to be true.

What Do You Report?

Make the report even if you do not have all the information:

- Name, age, address and current location of the child
- Name and address of child's parents or caretakers, if known
- Name and address of suspected perpetrator
- Location where maltreatment took place, if known
- The nature and extent of the child's injuries
- Any other information the reporter believes might be helpful in establishing the
- Cause of the injuries and the identity of the perpetrator.

3. In addition to reporting to the state authorities, Church Personnel are required to report any reasonably suspected or known abuse of children or youth that may have been perpetrated by Church Personnel or on church property directly to the rector of St. Catherine's Episcopal Church so that immediate and proper steps may be taken to ensure the safety of alleged victims. The Rector is also required to report any suspected or known abuse of children or youth to the Intake Officer in the Bishop's Office.

4. Reports of suspected or known abuse that involve Church Personnel may be reported to the Diocese of Atlanta in the following ways:

- a. A telephone call, meeting or email to the Intake Officer of the Diocese;
- b. A telephone call or meeting with the rector if the rector is not the person suspected of abuse.
- c. Submit a Notice of concern (Appendix B), signed or unsigned, to the diocesan Intake Officer. The Intake Officer is The Rev. Canon Alicia Schuster Weltner at 404-601- 5349; 800-537-6743 x 123 or email aschusterweltner@episcopalatlanta.org.

5. The Diocese of Atlanta and all parishes or Episcopal institutions involved will cooperate with any investigation by state authorities to the fullest extent appropriate and inform authorities that a concurrent internal investigation will be directed by the Diocese of Atlanta.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND 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 for General Conduct for the Protection of Children and defined in the Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse.

___ I agree to comply with the 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 in accordance with the POLICIES FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH FROM ABUSE.

___ 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.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND SIGNATURE

If hired or chosen as a volunteer, I agree to be bound by the policies and procedures of St. Catherine's Episcopal Church including but not limited to its POLICIES FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH FROM ABUSE and CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH. I understand that these may be changed, withdrawn, added to or interpreted at any time at the Parish or Preschool's sole discretion and without prior notice to me. I also understand that my employment or volunteering may be terminated, or any offer or acceptance of employment or volunteering withdrawn, at any time, with or without cause, and with or without prior notice at the option of St. Catherine's or myself.

Nothing contained herein is intended to or creates a contract between myself and St. Catherine's Episcopal Church for employment, volunteering or the providing of any benefit.

I HAVE BEEN GIVEN A COPY OF THE POLICIES REFERRED TO, HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THEM AND THE ABOVE PROVISIONS.

Print Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

APPENDIX A to the Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse
St. Catherine's Episcopal Church

Mentoring Program

St. Catherine's Mentoring Program offers support on a one-on-one basis to youth as they journey through their teenage years which sometimes can be challenging and turbulent. St. Catherine's Episcopal Church Mentors agree to enter into a formal confidential relationship for a year. In order to protect our teenagers from any harm, St. Catherine's Episcopal Church requires that all adults participating in this program read, acknowledge and adhere to the Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse including the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children and Youth. Specifically the Mentoring Program has adopted the following procedures:

- Screening and Checking Mentor Candidates
- Training Mentor Candidates
- Mentoring Activities
- Monitoring Mentor Activities
- Satellite Program with Neighboring Schools
- Prayer Partnering

SCREENING AND CHECKING OF MENTOR CANDIDATES

Adult mentors who have requested to become mentors of our youth are first screened, interviewed, and background-checked prior to receiving the required mentor training.

Screening

1. Candidates are required to complete a Volunteer Application Form including his/her consent for a background check. All references will be contacted. All background checks, sex offender checks will conform to the guidelines contained in the Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse.
2. Mentors must be members of St. Catherine's Episcopal Church for at least six months and known to the congregation. Exceptions to this rule must be approved by the Rector.
3. The Mentor Coordinator and Youth Director will conduct an interview of the applicant using the completed application form. Any exceptions noted during the interview are documented on the application form and communicated to the Rector. The Youth Director, Mentor Coordinator and Rector will decide whether the candidate is satisfactorily qualified.

Training Mentor Candidates

After successfully interviewing and passing all required background checks, the candidate completes following required training:

1. Orientation training, provided by the Mentor Coordinator, consists of training focusing on communication skills, as well as policies and procedures of the Mentor program. The Mentor Coordinator will advise the Youth Director as to the specifics of the training, i.e. Date, location, attendees, etc.
2. Additionally, candidates are required to complete the three hour Safeguarding God's Children (SGC) Certification which is sponsored by The Episcopal Church and adapted by the Diocese of Atlanta and St. Catherine's Episcopal Church.

After completing the required training, providing a copy of the Certificate of Completion of the Safeguarding God's Children program, and signing the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse, the qualified candidate joins the mentor pool and is available for a mentoree assignment.

Mentoring Activities

At St. Catherine's, mentoring activities are available to young people aged 12 to 18 years of age and involve:

1. A kickoff meeting between the parent, the young person, the Mentor and the Mentor Coordinator and Youth Director (at his or her discretion). The Mentor Guidelines (Appendix B) are discussed, and consent by all parties is documented by their signature on the guideline statement.
2. One-on-one meetings between the adult and the youth occur in public settings. These meetings occur at least once every two weeks. Typically, mentors and mentorees will meet over a meal at a restaurant where they can discuss experiences which the young person is going through. Mentors do not meet with the mentorees privately in homes or in closed quarters. The mentor is required to document each visit by a brief one line entry on the Contact Record Sheet which notes the date of each meeting, the amount of time spent, and whether or not the parent knew of the meeting.
3. Group activities happen two or three times per year where mentors and mentorees participate together in group events. Examples include attending ball games, group rafting trips, group hikes, bowling events, or visiting the Georgia Aquarium. The group may culminate in a meal in a restaurant before returning to the church. While transportation is provided via the church van, mentors are permitted to drive their mentorees separately if they wish.

Monitoring Mentor Activities

The Youth Director and Mentor Coordinator monitor the program's activities through the following:

1. The Youth Director will be in regular contact with the Mentor Coordinator to receive updates on the mentoring activities.
2. Monthly discussions between the mentor and the coordinator also occur with the purpose of ensuring that the mentor and mentee are meeting regularly and that things are going well.

3. The Mentor Coordinator conducts quarterly supervision meetings which all active mentors are required to attend. Any active mentor who is absent two meetings in a given year is dismissed from the program. The supervision meetings involve discussion of their mentoring relationship with the other peer mentors. The purpose of this is to give assistance to the mentor so that the relationship can be improved. Prior to the supervision meeting, the mentor completes a Check-in form in which he or she documents the status of the relationship. This form is used to discuss the status of the relationship at the supervision meeting.
4. Contacts between the Mentor Coordinator and the young person occur to ensure that the young person is satisfied that the relationship is going well.
5. Annual evaluations of Mentorees who have been meeting for at least a year are completed to ensure that the relationship is going well.

Satellite Program with Neighboring Schools

The Mentor Program has a satellite program with neighboring schools, such as Wheeler High and East Cobb Middle. The Social Worker assigned to these schools contacts the Mentor Coordinator when he/she desires mentoring services for a student. (Normally, such students have been referred by the teacher to the Guidance Counselor and then to the Social Worker.) At such time, the Mentor Coordinator will make every effort to obtain the broadest picture of the context and concerns of the potential Mentoree and will share that information with the Rector and Youth Director. Once the student has been accepted into the Mentoring Program, the Coordinator will treat such referrals in the same manner as any young person from within the parish who desires to have a Mentor relationship. Approval by the parent is required and is documented in the Mentor Guidelines at the kickoff meeting. The Mentor must be a church member and must be approved by the Rector.

APPENDIX B to the Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse
St. Catherine's Episcopal Church

St. Catherine's Youth Mentoring Program Guidelines

This mentoring program is designed to put young people in contact with trained adults in addition to their existing contacts with their parental mentors. The purpose of this relationship is to support the youth as they go through their challenging and sometimes difficult experiences as a teenager. The mentor should first and foremost be a good friend to the young person. The relationship is characterized by:

- One year formal relationship with renewal for another year.
- Meetings twice monthly, each lasting about one hour.
- Meetings held in public places (e.g. restaurants, sporting events, theaters, parks, etc.)
- Opportunities for the young person to talk about their daily experiences.
- Good listening skills exhibited by the mentor.
- The mentor shall keep confidential what the young person shares, but the young person is not held to this requirement. It is okay for the existence of the relationship to be known to others, but not what is said or learned in those meetings. The only exception is when the information shared indicates danger to someone's well-being (e.g. abuse, suicide, or threats to others).
- Full support of the parent(s).
- Discussions between the parent and the mentor only when the mentoree is present.

If and when it is time for the formal mentoring relationship to end, a closure meeting should be held between the young person and the mentor.

If at any time you feel things aren't going well, or you have suggestions for improving the program, feel free to contact the Mentoring Coordinator, Youth Director or the Rector.

I agree to follow these guidelines.

(Mentoree)

(Parent)

(Mentor)

Date: _____

APPENDIX D to the Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse
St. Catherine's Episcopal Church

Youth Mentoring Program: Meeting Check-in Form

**St Catherine's Mentor Program
Check In Statement**

How long have you and your mentoree been meeting?

How often have you been meeting?

What is the normal Length of meeting?

Where have you been meeting?

What activities do you like to do together?

Is (are) the parent(s) aware of each meeting?

How does (do) the parent(s) feel about the relationship?

How does the Mentoree feel about the relationship?

How do you feel about the relationship?

What is going well?

What is not going well?

Are there any special concerns or issues?

What can the group do to support you and your Mentoring Relationship?

APPENDIX E to the Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse
St. Catherine’s Episcopal Church

Leadership Matrix

Personnel	Application Requirements						Training Requirements						
	Application w/ references	Background Check	DMV Check	Interview	Insured / bonded	Policies to receive & sign	SGC Training	SGP Training	SO Only (initial)	Attend 1-Hr Orientation	Supervisor Training	Attend annual review mtg	Recertification (SO + 1 hr)
Clergy													
Rector	Y	Y	Y	Y		C/P	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y
Associate Rector	Y	Y	Y	Y		C/P	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y
Lay Paid Staff													
Parish Administrator	Y	Y	Y	Y		C/P	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y
Secretary	Y	Y		Y		C	Y					Y	Y
Communications Director	Y	Y		Y		C	Y						Y
Organist	Y	Y		Y		C	Y					Y	Y
Adult Choir Director	Y	Y		Y		C/P	Y	Y				Y	Y
Youth Director	Y	Y	Y	Y		C/P	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y
Preschool Director	Y	Y	Y	Y		C/P	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y
Preschool Staff	Y	Y		Y		C	Y					Y	Y
Preschool Substitute Teachers	Y	Y		Y		C			Y				
Nursery Staff	Y	Y		Y		C	Y					Y	Y
Lay Volunteers													
Vestry						C/P	Y	Y					Y
Vestry Officer						C/P	Y	Y					Y
Ministry Team Conveners						P		Y					
Preschool Board						C	Y						Y
Youth Mentor Coordinator	Y	Y	Y			C/P	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y
Youth Mentors	Y	Y	Y			C	Y					Y	Y
Youth Volunteers who spend Overnight	Y	Y	Y			C	Y					Y	Y
Youth Volunteers more than 4 times/year	Y	Y	Y			C	Y					Y	Y
Confirmation Sponsors	Y	Y				C			Y				
Youth Choir Director	Y	Y				C	Y					Y	Y
CGS Coordinator	Y	Y				C/P	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y
CGS Catechists	Y	Y				C	Y					Y	Y
CGS Assistants (> 4 times/year)	Y	Y				C	Y					Y	Y
Catholic CGS Leaders/Assistants						C						Y	
Journey to Adulthood Teachers	Y	Y	Y			C	Y					Y	Y
Children’s Chapel Lead	Y	Y				C	Y					Y	Y
Acolyte Masters	Y	Y				C	Y					Y	Y
Eucharistic Ministers						P		Y					
Family Promise Coordinator	Y	Y				C/P	Y	Y			Y	Y	Y
Family Promise Host	Y	Y				C/P	Y	Y				Y	Y
Family Promise Overnight Staff	Y	Y				C/P	Y	Y				Y	Y
“The Journey” Catechists and Sponsors						P		Y					
Stephen Leaders	Y	Y		Y		P		Y			Y	Y	
Stephen Ministers	Y	Y		Y		P		Y				Y	
Youth Volunteers less than 4 times/year		Y				None							
CGS Substitutes/Assistants (< 4 times/year)		Y				C							
VBS Adult/Youth Volunteers		Y				C			Y				
Christmas Pageant Volunteers		Y				None							
Adult Church School Teachers						P							
Volunteer Parish Office Staff		Y				None							
Children’s Chapel Assistants		Y				C							
Outside Contractors													
Preschool After-School Program Leaders	Y	Y			Y	C			Y				
Boy Scouts													
Cleaning Crew					Y	None							

LEGEND	
C or SGC = Safeguarding God’s Children	SO = Safeguarding Online
P or SGP = Safeguarding God’s People	

APPENDIX F to the Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse
St. Catherine's Episcopal Church

Application Form for Church and Preschool Employees



It's Our 50th Anniversary – Remember Rejoice Renew

St. Catherine's Episcopal Church

571 Holt Road - Marietta, Georgia 30068 770-971-2839 www.stcatherines.org

**Application Form for Church and Preschool Employees
[Including Acknowledgement, Release, and Signature]**

Instructions: Please complete all of the questions accurately and fully. Attach additional sheets if needed.

Today's date: _____

Personal Data

Name: _____ Maiden name: _____

Street address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

How long at current address: _____

Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____

Best time to contact you: _____ Email address: _____

Driver license number: _____ State: _____

Social Security number: _____ *Needed for background check and will be kept in a secure file.*

Are you legally eligible to work in this country? Yes _____ No _____

*Note: If you are chosen for a paid position, you will be required to show documents verifying your employment eligibility and identity to complete the INS Form I-9 as required by the **Immigration Reform and Control Act**.*

Emergency Contact

Name: _____ Relationship to You: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Cell Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Street address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please list your home addresses in the past five years:

For what position are you applying? _____

What interests you about the position for which you are currently applying?

What has prepared you for the position for which you are currently applying?

Have you ever been accused of physically, sexually, or emotionally abusing a child or an adult?

Yes ____ No ____

If yes, please explain

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, please explain

You will be asked to sign letters addressed to each of the following references and contacts, permitting the individual to reply to our request for information. Your cooperation is appreciated. Thank you.

References: Professional, Personal, or Civic

Please provide the names, addresses, and phone numbers of three references. Please include at least one person familiar with your volunteer or civic work and at least one personal reference. Please submit the name of no more than one family member as a reference.

Name & How Known	For How Long?	Address, City, State, & Zip	Telephone Number	Email Address

Employment Experience

Please list your two most recent places of employment, describing the nature of your job and the reason you left the employer. Provide also the name of a contact person with each organization, including that person's address and phone number. Additional sheets may be attached if needed.

Employer & Description of Work	Contact Person, Address, & Telephone Number	Dates of Employment	Reason for Leaving

I give permission for St. Catherine's Episcopal Church or Preschool to contact my current employer.

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Initials

Volunteer Experience

Please list two organizations for which you most recently volunteered, describing the nature of your volunteer activity. Provide also the name of a contact person with each organization, including that person's address, phone number, and/or email address. Additional sheets maybe attached, if needed.

Organization & Activities	Contact Person	Address	Telephone Number	Email

Acknowledgment, Release and Signature

To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this application is complete and accurate. I understand that providing false information is grounds for not hiring me or for my discharge if I have already been hired.

I authorize any person or organization, whether or not identified in this application, to provide any information concerning my previous employment, education, credit history, driving record, criminal conviction record, sexual offender registry or other qualifications for my employment. I also authorize St. Catherine's Episcopal Church, Marietta, Georgia to request and receive such information.

If hired, I understand that I will be required to read, sign, and adhere to the policies and procedures of St. Catherine's Episcopal Church, Marietta, Georgia, concerning safe church practices for the protection of children, youth, and adults from abuse and harassment.

I also understand that my employment may be terminated, or any offer or acceptance of employment withdrawn, at any time, with or without cause, and with or without prior notice at the option of St. Catherine's Episcopal Church, Marietta, Georgia or myself.

Nothing contained in this application or in any pre-employment communication is intended to or creates a contract between myself and St. Catherine's Episcopal Church, Marietta, Georgia for either employment, or the providing of any benefit.

I have read and understand the above provisions.

Signature

Date

APPENDIX G to the Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse
St. Catherine's Episcopal Church

Volunteer Application Form



It's Our 50th Anniversary – Remember Rejoice Renew

St. Catherine's Episcopal Church

571 Holt Road - Marietta, Georgia 30068 770-971-2839 www.stcatherines.org

Volunteer Application Form, Acknowledgement, Release, and Signature

Today's date: _____

Instructions: Please complete all of the questions accurately and fully. Attach additional sheets if needed.

Personal Data

Name: _____ Maiden name: _____

Street address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

How long at current address: _____

Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____

Best time to contact you: _____ Email address: _____

Driver license number: _____ State: _____

Social Security number: _____ *Needed for background check and will be kept in a secure file.*

Emergency Contact

Name: _____ Relationship to You: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Cell Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Street address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please list your home addresses in the past five years:

For what position are you applying? _____

What interests you about the position for which you are currently applying?

What has prepared you for the position for which you are currently applying?

Have you ever been accused of physically, sexually, or emotionally abusing a child or an adult?

Yes ____ No ____

If yes, please explain

Have you ever been convicted of a felony? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please explain

You will be asked to sign letters addressed to each of the following references and contacts, permitting the individual to reply to our request for information. Your cooperation is appreciated. Thank you.

Employment Experience

Please list your current or most recent place of employment, including a description of the nature of your job. Provide also the name of a contact person, that person's address, phone number, and email address. Include your reason for leaving, if applicable. Additional sheets may be attached if needed.

Employer & Description of Work	Contact Person, Address, Telephone Number & Email Address	Dates of Employment	Reason for Leaving

Volunteer Experience

Please list two organizations for which you most recently volunteered, describing the nature of your volunteer activity. Provide also the name of a contact person with each organization, including that person's address, phone number, and/or email address. Additional sheets maybe attached, if needed.

Organization & Activities	Contact Person	Address	Telephone Number	Email

References: Professional, Personal, or Civic

Please provide the names, addresses, and phone numbers of three references. Please include at least one person familiar with your volunteer or civic work and at least one personal reference. Please submit the name of no more than one family member as a reference.

Name & How Known	For How Long?	Address, City, State, & Zip	Telephone Number	Email Address

Acknowledgment, Release and Signature

To the best of my knowledge, the information contained in this application is complete and accurate. I understand that providing false information is grounds for not selecting me as a volunteer, or for my discharge if I have already been selected.

I authorize any person or organization, whether or not identified in this application, to provide any information concerning my previous employment, driving record, criminal conviction record, sexual offender registry or other qualifications for my volunteer position. I also authorize St. Catherine's Episcopal Church, Marietta, Georgia to request and receive such information.

If selected, I understand that I will be required to read, sign and adhere to the policies and procedures of St. Catherine's Episcopal Church, Marietta, Georgia, concerning safe church practices for the protection of children, youth, and adults from abuse and harassment.

I also understand that my volunteering may be terminated, or any offer or acceptance of volunteering withdrawn, at any time, with or without cause, and with or without prior notice at the option of St. Catherine's Episcopal Church, Marietta, Georgia or myself.

Nothing contained in this application or in any pre-volunteer communication is intended to or creates a contract between myself and St. Catherine's Episcopal Church, Marietta, Georgia for either volunteering or the providing of any benefit.

I have read and understand the above provisions.

Signature

Date

APPENDIX H to the Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse
St. Catherine's Episcopal Church

Letter of Consent for References



It's Our 50th Anniversary – Remember Rejoice Renew

St. Catherine's Episcopal Church

571 Holt Road - Marietta, Georgia 30068
770-971-2839 www.stcatherines.org

Letter of Consent for References

NAME OF REFERENCE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

I, _____, have submitted an application for a position as an employee or volunteer (please circle one) with St. Catherine's Episcopal Church or St. Catherine's Preschool, and have provided your name as a reference.

I hope to work as a(n) _____. This letter, bearing my signature, indicates that I give you my consent to provide information to St. Catherine's Episcopal Church or Preschool through its representative named below. This consent is valid for one year from the date it is signed.

SIGNATURE

DATE

The Churches and Agencies within the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta are strongly committed to reducing the risk of sexual misconduct. In support of that commitment, clergy, employees, and volunteers agree to participate in Background Checks and to seek references from individuals such as you. PLEASE NOTE: This form is used for both volunteers and paid staff. Receipt of this form does not necessarily imply that the applicant is contemplating a change in her/his present employment.

Please complete the following questionnaire at your earliest convenience and return it in the envelope provided. The information gathered will be held in confidence, as the law provides. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this application please contact me at 770-971-2839.

Thank you,

SIGNATURE

DATE

PRINT NAME

POSITION

APPENDIX I to the Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse
St. Catherine's Episcopal Church

CONFIDENTIAL NOTICE OF CONCERN

Individual(s) of Concern:

Date of occurrence:

Time of occurrence:

Type of Concern:

Inappropriate behavior with a child or youth

Policy violation with a child or youth

Possible risk of abuse

Other concern:

Describe the situation:

What happened?

Where it happened?

When it happened?

Who was involved?

Who was present?

Who was notified?

If reported to the State, what was their recommendation about investigating?

Attach additional sheets if needed.

Has this situation ever occurred previously?

Attach additional sheets if needed.

What action was taken? How was the situation handled, who was involved, who was questioned, were police called?

Attach additional sheets if needed.

What is the follow-up plan?

Does anyone else need to be notified?

Will the situation need monitoring?

Would you like someone to call you to discuss this situation? Attach additional sheets if needed.

Submitted by: (Please print)

Telephone number:

Location and address:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Reviewed by:

Inappropriate behaviors or possible policy violations that relate to interactions with children or youth should be reported in one of the following ways:

- a. A telephone call or meeting with the immediate supervisor of the person,
- b. A telephone call or meeting with the rector, if the person is not the rector
- c. A telephone call or meeting with a church warden if the person is the rector;

d. A telephone call, meeting or email with the Intake Officer in the Bishop's Office. 404-601-5320 or 800-537-6743 – ask for Canon Richard Callaway or after September 15, 2011, ask for The Rev. Canon Alicia Schuster Weltner. Email: aschusterweltner@episcopalatlanta.org. You may mail this Confidential Notice of Concern to her attention at Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta, 2744 Peachtree Rd. NW, Atlanta, GA 30305. Please note CONFIDENTIAL on the envelope.

APPENDIX J to the Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth from Abuse
St. Catherine's Episcopal Church

Mandatory Reporting Laws

General Information

Georgia Governor Nathan Deal signed into law HB 1176, the Criminal Justice Reform bill in May 2012. Among other things, it expands the pool of mandated reporters already in Georgia law to include volunteers whose duties include attending to children; and it includes clergy with an amended "confessional" protection. This law becomes effective July 1, 2012 under Code Section 19-7-5 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to reporting of child abuse.

Subsections of the Code where changes were made are indicated below (b, c, e, and g).

(b)

Georgia law defines "child abuse" as:

- physical injury or death inflicted upon a child by a parent or caretaker by other than accidental means
- neglect or exploitation of a child by a parent or caretaker*;
- sexual abuse of a child (does NOT include consensual sex acts between minors or between a minor and an adult not more than 5 years older than the minor
- sexual exploitation of a child (conduct by any person who allows, permits, encourages, or requires that child to engage in prostitution or sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing any visual or print medium depicting such conduct.)
- However, no child who in good faith is being treated solely by spiritual means through prayer in accordance with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination by a duly accredited practitioner thereof shall, for that reason alone, be considered to be an 'abused' child.

*'Caretaker' -- If a person is a 'caretaker', it is best to call the Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS). If the person is not a caretaker the police are usually better able to respond. However, this is not an exact science. You may report to either and they will sort it out. Who MUST Report?

(c)

1) Georgia law generally requires those who work with families or who come in contact with children to report suspected child abuse.

Designated professionals include:

- Physicians, interns or residents;
- Hospital or medical personnel;
- Dentists;
- Licensed psychologists and interns;
- Podiatrists;
- RPNs and LPNs; nurse's aides
- Professional counselors, social workers, or marriage and family therapists;
- School teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, (all levels of educational system)
- Child welfare agency personnel;
- Child-counseling personnel;
- Child service organization personnel: means persons employed by or volunteering at a business or an organization, whether public, private, for profit, not for profit, or voluntary, that provides care, treatment, education, training, supervision, coaching, counseling, recreational programs, or shelter to children.
- Law enforcement personnel;
- Reproductive health care facility or pregnancy resource center personnel and volunteers

- Clergy: ministers, priests, rabbis, imams, or similar functionaries, by whatever name called, of a bona fide religious organization*

* See section (g)

(2) If a person is required to report child abuse pursuant to this subsection because that person attends to a child pursuant to such person's duties as an employee of or volunteer at a hospital, school, social agency, or similar facility, that person shall notify the person in charge of the facility, or the designated delegate thereof, and the person so notified shall report or cause a report to be made in accordance with this Code section. An employee or volunteer who makes a report to the person designated pursuant to this paragraph shall be deemed to have fully complied with this subsection. Under no circumstances shall any person in charge of such hospital, school, agency, or facility, or the designated delegate thereof, to whom such notification has been made exercise any control, restraint, modification, or make other change to the information provided by the reporter, although each of the aforementioned persons may be consulted prior to the making of a report and may provide any additional, relevant, and necessary information when making the report."

To Whom Do You Report?

(e)

An oral report shall be made immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused, by telephone or otherwise and followed by a report in writing, if requested, to a child welfare agency providing protective services, as designated by the Department of Human Services, or, in the absence of such agency, to an appropriate police authority or district attorney. If a report of child abuse is made to the child welfare agency or independently discovered by the agency, and the agency has reasonable cause to believe such report is true or the report contains any allegation or evidence of child abuse, then the agency shall immediately notify the appropriate police authority or district attorney. Such reports shall contain the names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or caretakers, if known, the child's age, the nature and extent of the child's injuries, including any evidence of previous injuries, and any other information that the reporting person believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries and the identity of the perpetrator. Photographs of the child's injuries to be used as documentation in support of allegations by hospital employees or volunteers, physicians, law enforcement personnel, school officials, or employees or volunteers of legally mandated public or private child protective agencies may be taken without the permission of the child's parent or guardian. Such photographs shall be made available as soon as possible to the chief welfare agency providing protective services and to the appropriate police authority."

(g)

Suspected child abuse which is required to be reported by any person pursuant to this Code section shall be reported notwithstanding that the reasonable cause to believe such abuse has occurred or is occurring is based in whole or in part upon any communication to that person which is otherwise made privileged or confidential by law; provided, however, that a member of the clergy shall not be required to report child abuse reported solely within the context of confession or other similar communication required to be kept confidential under church doctrine or practice. When a clergy member receives information about child abuse from any other source, the clergy member shall comply with the reporting requirements of this Code section, even though the clergy member may have also received a report of child abuse from the confession of the perpetrator."

After hours centralized intake: 1-855-GA CHILD (422-4453) 5pm-8am weekdays/ 24 hours on weekends / holidays / furlough days. These numbers are currently not available for Fulton and DeKalb counties. In these counties you must call Fulton or DeKalb DFCS directly.

If unable to reach DFCS, or if the child is in immediate danger, report to local law enforcement (911) or district attorney in the county where the child lives. Comply with any internal workplace protocols: In Episcopal Churches and institutions, please make a similar report to the Rector, Warden or Director of the parish or institution and/or the diocesan Intake Officer so that proper procedures may be followed.

The diocesan Intake Officer is The Rev. Canon Alicia Schuster Weltner and she may be reached at aschusterweltner@episcopalatlanta.org. or call her at 404-601-5320 x 123. If you send an email, please do not describe the situation in the email. Simply say it concerns an abusive situation, then leave your phone number and the best time for her to call. She will return your call as soon as possible.

What Do You Report?

"Reasonable cause to believe a child has been abused". Suspicions, not necessarily direct evidence.

Make the report even if you do not have all the information:**

- Name, age, address and current location of the child
- Name and address of child's parents or caretakers, if known
- Name and address of suspected perpetrator
- Location where maltreatment took place, if known
- The nature and extent of the child's injuries
- Any other information the reporter believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries and the identity of the perpetrator.

** Please see the "Confidential Notice of Concern" form in Appendix I. It is also available on www.episcopalatlanta.org.

Rights of Mandated Reporters

- Anonymity or confidentiality (when at all possible)
- Knowledge of the outcome ONLY of a report
- Immunity for "good faith" report
- Penalty for NOT reporting: Any person or official required by Georgia law to report suspected cases of child maltreatment and who knowingly and willfully fails to do so shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Director of Safe Church Practices, The Rev. Dr. Deborah Silver at 404-601-5358 or 800-536-6743 or dsilver@episcopalatlanta.org. She will be happy to speak with you. Remember, if reporting suspected abuse, please contact our Intake Officer, The Rev. Canon Alicia Schuster Weltner, mentioned above.