

the personnel committee, the church and work references should be **contacted** and **checked** on all paid employees and volunteers.

The nominating committee would select only those persons who have cleared the screening process.

Completion of a "criminal records" check authorization form should be used when considered appropriate.

Completion of a "credit check" authorization form should be used when considered appropriate.

3. A screening form should be used for those individuals who are **scheduled to work one hour a month or less** in the extended sessions.
4. A **personal interview** should be conducted by two (2) ordained staff members and/or the personnel committee for those individuals who will be dealing with minors in an **overnight event or in unsupervised activities**.

A good "**rule of thumb**" is to **never allow anyone** who has been a church member **less than a year** to work with children or youth. Certainly, exceptions to this policy may be considered with **wisdom and discretion**. Such as, the **written recommendation of a current ordained church staff member** based on prior personal knowledge of the volunteer and/or a **written recommendation from the prior church**. Your attorney is the best source of information regarding the laws concerning the church and sexual misconduct. It is important to seek an attorney familiar with these laws.

Any potential worker who **has been convicted of or pleaded guilty** to either child sexual or physical abuse should **not** be allowed to work in any capacity with minors.

Any potential worker who has been either sexually, emotionally or physically abused while a minor **should not** work with minors until **interviewed and approved** by the senior pastor and/or the personnel committee.

Managing Worker Supervision

The Two Adult Rule:

Two (2) or more unrelated adults should be present during any church educational or training activity on the church premises. The adult should be at least twenty-one (21) years old or more.

If one must leave the room for any reason, another person should be engaged to fill in the few minutes necessary.

This not only protects the children from potential abuse but also protects the adults from potential accusations. In addition, two related adults should not be allowed to work in the same classroom situation.

It is suggested that no teenagers (less than 15 years old) be used with bed babies.

As to one/two year olds, it is suggested that teenagers could assist as long as they are closely supervised by an adult. This means that the teenager should never be left alone without adult supervision at all times. The suggested ratio of adults to children in this age group is one to three. The very minimum would be to increase the ratio to four/five children.

Threes through kindergarten suggested ratio is one to four. The introduction of teens to this mix would then make the ratio one to five/six. Again the teenager should never be left alone with the children.

This same two-adult rule should be followed through classes involving youth to eighteen (18) years of age.

The use of teenagers no matter how qualified highly increases the potential liability for the church, and additionally could prevent some potential parent from attending and/or joining your church. **The end result is that the church must make the final decision as to what liability they are willing to risk.**

The Three Adult Rule:

Three (3) or more adults should be present during **any church activity** away from the church facilities involving minors.

The adult to minor ratio for any activity away from the church should be **one (1) adult to every eight (8) minors.**

Parental Permission:

Minors attending regularly scheduled church activities are implied to have parental permission.

The worker shall obtain the written consent of the parent/guardian before going out alone with the minor, or spending time with the minor in an unsupervised situation. Such meetings should be held in church facilities where they can be visible or at a public where there is high visibility

Questionable Behavior:

Any observed **inappropriate conduct or relationship** between adult volunteers or paid staff member and a minor **should be confronted immediately.** Situations where such behavior continues should result in terminating the use of both the volunteer or paid staff member as appropriate.

Prior to beginning work with minors, each potential worker **should be counseled** concerning possible results of abusive relationships with minors.

Windows should be installed in **all classroom doors of rooms** used with minors.

Pairs of adults should be used as chaperons and supervisors for overnight events and should be approved by the senior pastor or his designee and/or personnel committee in advance of the event. There should be **one adult to chaperon every ten (10) participants.**

Each potential worker with minors **should be given a copy** of any existing policy concerning child abuse that the church may have during the recruiting process and they should acknowledge that they have read the entire document and agree with its contents.

Managing Security of Preschool Age Children

All preschool children will be treated as individuals requiring security.

The parent/guardian bringing a pre-school child to any church-sponsored activity will be given a token, receipt or card. That token, receipt or card will match a similar item placed on the child at the time of arrival. First time parent/guardian should fill out an enrollment card giving the basic information on their child. No child should be given to a parent/guardian without that parent/guardian identifying himself/herself with and returning the token, receipt or card.

A secondary procedure should require that parents or guardians provide correct answers to identification questions.

Managing Reporting Obligations (Questions and Answers)

A. Q: What constitutes sexual/child abuse?

A: In Kansas, child abuse is typically defined as any non-accidental physical injury, physical neglect, emotional injury or sexual act inflicted upon a child by a parent or caregiver. (See "Symptoms of Abuse/Molestation".)