

Camp & Retreat Ministries Child Protection Policy

(from Appendix L in the Policies and Procedures Appendix)

We realize the importance of protecting all children left in our care, and therefore adopt the following policy. The policy is a five-point strategy including procedures for:

- **Staff selection** - to prevent known offenders from having access to children in the care of our camps.
- **Education** - training volunteer and paid staff to aid in the prevention and detection of child abuse.
- **Prevention** - establish policies and procedures that create barriers to child abuse within our programs.
- **Reporting** - establish procedures in accordance with State laws for the reporting and handling of child abuse cases.
- **Removal** - swift removal of offenders.

A. Staff Selection

1. All Staff and Volunteers will be required to complete a Disclosure Form. The Camp Director-Manager will be responsible for reviewing all Disclosure Forms for Camp Staff, Camp Deans, Camp Counselors, and other staff persons (paid or volunteer) on site during program camps. Any “yes” answers on the disclosure portion of the form may disqualify the applicant from any staff position. Any failure to fully complete the Disclosure Form or any false statement made thereon will disqualify the applicant.
2. All Camp Deans are responsible to submit names and addresses of all staff under their direction to the Director in time to allow for all paper work to be completed (45 days recommended).
3. **Screening Procedures** – Screening, reference checks, and review procedures are detailed in the CRMT Policies and Procedures Handbook

B. Education

1. All persons for whom a Disclosure Form is required will be trained in at least the following subject areas:
 - Types of Abuse
 - Causes and Indicators of Abuse
 - Reporting
 - What To Do When You Suspect or Discover Child Abuse

- Understanding the Victim
- Working with Abuse Victims
- Camp Child Protection Policies and Procedures

2. The Director is responsible for ensuring all Camp Staff and Camp Deans are properly trained. Camp Deans will be responsible for ensuring their counselors are trained prior to the start of camp.

C. *Prevention*

The following policies and procedures will be followed to minimize the opportunities for abuse on site:

1. Privacy - Adult camp staff will respect the privacy of campers when changing or showering to the extent safety allows.
2. "Two-deep" leadership – Camp activities shall be conducted within sight / supervision of two or more staff persons. The concept of "two-deep" leadership is for adults to never be alone with campers.
3. Personal Counseling - All staff members will avoid a one-on-one situation "behind closed doors". If private counseling must be done it should be done separately from the group, but in plain sight.
4. Closed Campus - Except for emergencies, campers are not to leave the camp except for approved camp activities. Parental permission is required for all off camp activities. By no means is a single counselor allowed to leave with a single camper. A parent can, however, at the discretion of the Camp Director, pick up a child and later return them to camp.
5. Security - All visitors (e.g. parents and guardians) are required to check in and out with the Camp Dean or Director-Manager. All other persons on-site (e.g. contractors and volunteers) will be monitored by a staff member unless a Disclosure Form is submitted and the Child Protection Training is received.
6. Releasing Campers - Campers who are minors will only be released to their parent or legal guardian or someone authorized by them, as indicated in writing. If camper must leave during the camp session (for medical appointment, etc.), prior notification must be given to the dean.

D. Reporting

State laws require reporting of any suspected cases of abuse not previously reported to the appropriate authorities whether they occurred at camp or prior to camp. Police should be notified of any criminal activities (e.g. rape, assault). Camp procedures require the Director and the Conference Executive Director to be notified of any suspected abuse. Cases involving a Camp Dean should be reported to the Director. Cases involving the Director should be reported to the Conference Executive Director. Having reviewed the situation, this person will determine if the action was inappropriate behavior or suspected abuse. If the action is suspected abuse, the required reports will be made following the procedures for reporting outlined herewith. If the person making the initial report believes a case of abuse is being overlooked, they should contact the appropriate state agency.

1. REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE BY CAMP STAFF OR VOLUNTEERS

- a) Any staff who either makes the observation of suspected abuse or who receives information from a camper describing abuse, by an adult at camp, shall contact the Director immediately. **The suspected incident should not be discussed with anyone else.**
- b) The Director will begin a report form on the incident.
- c) Following the report, the Director (and other appropriate persons) shall make the following initial contacts in the order indicated.
 - Take a statement from the child/youth involved. The Director may wish to have the person making the initial report present to ease the child/youth. The Director should **be careful to listen to the child/youth and to not ask any leading questions.**
 - Talk with the person accused of abuse. **Do not ask leading questions.**
- d) Discern from the information you have gathered whether abuse is suspected or whether a staff member may have acted inappropriately. If there is any doubt, treat the case as abuse. To help in the discerning process, you may want to contact the Executive Director. Document all calls on the report form.
- e) If you discern the action was inappropriate behavior, you will need to decide if the action calls for suspension, reassignment, and/or confronting the issue. Document the following contacts:
 - Conversation with the accused regarding your decision.
 - Advise the initial reporter of your decision.
 - Parent/Guardian may need to be contacted.

f) If you decide the action was abuse, make the following contacts and document accordingly:

- Isolate the accused.
- Report suspected abuse to the state authorities.
- Record and follow recommendations of the authorities.
- Advise the person making the initial report that the authorities have been notified.
- Report to parent/guardian per the instructions of authorities.

g) Follow-up:

The Camp Dean should be aware that disclosure may affect other campers or staff, and appropriate counseling should be provided to deal with their feelings before leaving the camp. Follow-up with the local pastor may also be appropriate.

h) A full report must be submitted within two weeks to the Executive Director.

2. REPORTING A CAMPER'S DISCLOSURE OF SUSPECTED ABUSE (WHICH HAPPENED AWAY FROM CAMP) BY A CARETAKER, RELATIVE, AUTHORITY PERSON, OR PEER.

- a) Any Staff and Volunteers who receives information from a camper describing abuse that may have happened away from camp shall contact the Camp Dean immediately. **Note: The suspected incident should not be discussed with anyone else.**
- b) The Camp Dean or Director will begin a report form on the incident.
- c) Following the report, the Director shall make the following contacts in the order indicated. Following each contact, document the conversation/report on the report form.

- Take a statement from the child/youth **being careful to listen and to not question for details or ask leading questions.** The Director may wish to have the person making the initial report present to ease the child/youth.
- Report disclosure of suspected abuse to the appropriate state authorities and document on the report form. As you make the report, talk through:
 - a. how the report and the camper will be handled
 - b. how and if you should contact the parent/guardian
 - c. how and if you should contact police.

- Only if advised to do so by the authorities, contact the child's parent/guardian(s).

d) Follow-up:

The Camp Dean should be aware that disclosure may affect other campers **and staff, and appropriate counseling should be provided to deal with their** feelings before leaving the camp. Follow-up with local church pastor may be appropriate.

- e) A full report must be submitted within two weeks to the Executive Director.

3. REPORTING A DISCLOSURE OF SUSPECTED ABUSE TO A CAMPER BY A PEER AT CAMP

- a) Any Staff and Volunteers who receives information from a camper describing abuse that may have happened at camp shall contact the Director immediately. **Note: The suspected incident should not be discussed with anyone else.**

- b) Following the report, the Director shall begin a report form on the incident.

- c) The Director will make the following contacts, documenting each conversation on the report form.

- Take a statement from the child/youth **being careful to listen and to not question for details or ask leading questions.** The Director may wish to have the person making the initial report present to ease the child/youth. Be sensitive to the need to regain control of their life. Also be aware of both the safety of other campers and the needs of the abused.
- Talk to the person accused of the abuse. **Do not ask any leading questions.**

- d) Discern from the information you have gathered, whether abuse is suspected or whether a person has acted inappropriately. If there is any doubt, treat the case as abuse. To help in the discerning process you may want to contact as soon as possible the Executive Director. Document all calls on the report form.

- e) If you discern the action was inappropriate behavior, you will need to decide on disciplinary action. Such action could include counseling, notification of the camper's parents, or expulsion from camp. Document the following contacts:

- Conversation with the accused regarding your decision.
 - Advise the initial reporter of your decision.
 - Parent/Guardian may need to be contacted.
- f) If you suspect the action was abuse, make the following contacts and document accordingly:
- Isolate the accused, immediately.
 - Report suspected abuse to the appropriate state authorities.
 - Record and follow recommendations of the authorities.
 - Contact the parent/guardian of the offending person if approved by the authorities . Arrange for his/her transportation home, unless law enforcement has been notified.
 - Advise the person making the initial report that the authorities have been notified.
 - Report to the offended camper's parent/guardian

g) Follow-up:

The Camp Dean should be aware that disclosure may affect other campers and staff, and appropriate counseling should be provided to deal with their feelings before leaving the camp. Follow-up with local church pastors may be appropriate.

- h) A full report must be submitted within two weeks to the Executive Director.

—DEFINITIONS:

Abuse by a Peer - Physical or Sexual Abuse (below) by a minor child two years of age older than the victim or having authority over the victim.

Child Abuse - an act committed by a parent, care giver or person in a position of trust which is not accidental and which harms or threatens a child's physical or mental health or a child's welfare.

Emotional Abuse - verbal assault or emotional cruelty that affects a child's self esteem.

Inappropriate Behavior - conduct deemed to be unacceptable by the Camp Dean or Director other than abuse.

Isolate the Accused - to remove from contact with the campers.

Neglect - any negligence that harms a child's health, welfare, or safety.

Nonessential Personnel - persons on site during program camps to do repairs or other work not of an emergency nature.

Physical Abuse - When an adult injures a child other than by accident. Including, assault, shaking, slapping, burning, scalding, kicking, and strangling.

Program Camps - Any camping event sponsored by CRMT, excluding periods when the camp is rented to a third party hospitality group.

Sexual Abuse - Sexual behavior between an adult or other significantly older, more powerful person and a child, youth, or vulnerable adult. Includes behavior such as inappropriate verbal stimulation, taking or showing sexually explicit photos of or to a child, or exposing a child to pornography or adult sexual activity.

Staff - persons (paid or unpaid) who work during program camps.

Camp Staff - Cooks, Kitchen assistants, Lifeguards, Health Care Providers, Maintenance staff.

Program Staff - Camp Deans and Counselors.

Camp Deans - persons responsible for directing the program camps under the direction of the Director.

Camp Counselors - persons working in the program camps under the direction of the Camp Dean