

# New Hope UMC Children and Youth Protection Policy

**New Hope UMC  
Children & Youth Protection Policy**

**INTRODUCTION**

The people of the New Hope United Methodist Church believe it is in the best interests of New Hope and the children and youth of the church, and in the advancement of our Christian beliefs, to adopt policies and procedures to assist us in protecting the physical, mental and emotional well-being of the children and youth who participate in church-sponsored programs and activities.

Public ministry is a position of trust and responsibility. This trust is fundamental to the well-being of the Christian community. Misconduct of any sort, including physical, emotional or sexual<sup>1</sup>, violates this trust.

New Hope is committed to creating a safe and healthy environment in which young people can learn about and experience God's love. We, the church, will be advocates for children and establish clearly defined safeguards, policies and procedures for their protection. In order to ensure this, we expect that all people applying to be volunteers who work with minors will have been regularly attending New Hope for at least six months. We also require all volunteers who work with minors to complete the New Hope Employment/Authorized Volunteer Application and Disclosure Form. This form advises prospective employees and volunteers they may be subject to a criminal records check and may be required to provide a set of fingerprints pursuant to O.R.C. 109.575. This procedure is in accordance with Ohio S.B. 187 - Children's Services Organizations - Recommended Best Practices Established.

New Hope reserves the right to either select or refuse any individual the opportunity of working with children and youth.

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<sup>1</sup>Sexual conduct, sexual contact and sexual activity are defined under Section 2907.01 in the Ohio Revised Code and Chapter 2907 outlines the criminal law as it relates to sex offenses.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR FAMILIES?

**Partnering Parents** – We understand that any protective efforts that we, the New Hope UM Church, make in order to protect our children & youth can only be realized as we partner together with families. Here are some proactive steps that we ask you to prayerfully implement as we walk this journey together:

1. ***Begin in prayer*** – We recognize that our child’s safety is a physical and a spiritual issue and we covenant to pray for our children, our church, our community and others who work with children.
2. ***Check In Procedures*** – We covenant to make sure we abide by the following check in procedures and identification rules for our children:
  - a. Nursery (age 0-4) All infants and children will be brought to the nursery area by their parent or guardian. At the end of their visit with us, they will be released into the care of custodial parents or legal guardians, or persons approved in advance by the parents or legal guardians. **Unauthorized persons will not be allowed to remove infants or children.**
  - b. Children (age 4-6<sup>th</sup> grade) Identification Rule – All children who attend our children’s activities (for example, Vacation Bible School, Summer Reading Program) will be brought to the programming area by their parent or guardian for registration and to receive a name tag. For those who choose to attend Junior Church during worship services, once released to attend the child must remain in the classroom . At the end of the children’s program/junior church, they will be released into the care of custodial parents or legal guardians, or persons approved in advance by the parents or legal guardians. Unauthorized persons will not be allowed to remove children and ***children will not be allowed to leave the area by themselves.***
  - c. Youth (7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade) All Youth who attend our Sunday morning or weekday activities will go to the programing area. There they will sign in and remain in the programming area until the conclusion of the activities and they are released.
3. ***Drop-Offs and Pick-Ups*** – As parents/guardians, we covenant that we will not drop off our children or youth to any event more than 15 minutes prior to the activity. We also covenant to pick-up our child as the event ends. If we are going to be late to pick-up our child due to an emergency, we will contact the respective ministry personnel. There should not be any infant, child or teen wandering inside or outside of the church. We understand that if this happens, our child will be asked to return to the activity or appropriate area or we will be called. The appropriate ministry personnel should be notified upon drop-off if my child will be picked-up by another adult.
4. ***Playground Use*** – As parents/guardians, we will supervise our children on the playground and understand that children of any age are not permitted on the playground or outside the church building without our supervision.

## WHAT IS THE CHURCH DOING TO ACCOMPLISH THESE GOALS?

**Two Adult Rule** – Except in unusual circumstances, at least two adults, paid or volunteer, will be present/in the program area during all official, scheduled and public New Hope activities involving youth and children. At least one of the adult supervisors will be over 21 years of age. All supervisors will have completed the appropriate screening and training programs. **In the event of an exception to the Two Adult Rule, a Two Adult Rule Exception Form will be completed either before or promptly after the occurrence and kept on file. (See Appendix A)**

**Parental Permission Rule** - New Hope staff, long term and short term volunteer workers will not under the auspices of the church spend time alone with a child in an unsupervised activity unless parental permission is secured in advance of the activity. As a general rule, there should always be two adults present with a child. Adult supervisors should generally avoid all situations in which one adult and one child are alone together. Private counseling sessions in which one child and one adult will be alone together should be arranged only with the permission of the parents or guardians and with prior notification to New Hope and only at a time and place acceptable to the parents or guardians and New Hope.

**Coaching Rule** - When one-on-one coaching is done, a two-adult exception form must be filled out and all such things must be done in a public setting or in a room where the youth is clearly visible through a window. Also, in such cases, someone else (in the general proximity when such communication is occurring in a private room) must be aware of what is going on (and this must be reported on the form).

**Transportation Rule** - No New Hope Staff or long or short term volunteer may transport a child or youth to or from any New Hope activity without securing written permission from the custodial parents or guardians in advance. **(See Appendix C)**

**Overnight Rule** - Any program of New Hope which includes the supervision of children or youth during overnight activities will observe the following procedures:

1. Written permission from the custodial parents or guardians of the children involved will be secured in advance.
2. There should always be at least two approved adults who have completed the screening and training programs on site with the children at all times.
3. Children will not be allowed to leave the location of the overnight event with anyone except a custodial parent or guardian, or without the advance permission of the custodial parents or guardians.

## Suspicious Behavior Rule

***Between adult and child*** - Any inappropriate conduct or relationship between an adult and a child should be confronted immediately and investigated by the adult supervisors and the church pastor. This information should be conveyed immediately to the ministry leader, a pastor **or** chairperson of Staff Parish Relations for their discussion and action. The parents of the child involved will be immediately notified by church officials.

***Between youth or children*** - Any inappropriate conduct or relationship witnessed between youth or children should be confronted immediately and investigated by the adult supervisors and the church pastor. We are required by law to report any felony behavior of which we have direct knowledge to the authorities (*See Anderson's Ohio Revised Code, chapter 29, section 2907. This can be found at <http://onlinedocs.andersonpublishing.com/oh/lpExt.dll?f=templates&fn=main-h.htm&cp=PORC>.*) Students revealing potential questionable behavior should be coached to report activity to parents. Parents or guardians will be called.

Inappropriate behavior of youth or children would include - extreme rough housing or rudeness; disrespect of others; mental, emotional or physical abuse; romantic and sexual touching or contact. In cases where behavior is confessed but not directly witnessed, students should be encouraged to report to their parents themselves and make amends as is necessary.

**Discipline Rule** - No staff member or long or short term volunteer may use physical punishment to discipline a child in a New Hope program or activity. Striking, spanking, or any other such disciplinary methods can not be used. Children can be physically restrained by an adult other than the parents or guardian only when a child is in danger of injuring himself or someone else.

## **WORKER HIRING AND SELECTION**

### **Policy**

No person may serve on the staff of New Hope who has at any time been found guilty or who has entered a guilty plea in a court of law in any state or locality to charges of physical or sexual abuse of a child. All applicants for paid staff positions will be personally interviewed. This interview will be conducted before the hiring process is completed.

Any staff member who is convicted of physical or sexual abuse of a child, or who pleads guilty to such charges will be dismissed from the staff of New Hope according to personnel procedures.

### **Application**

All current and future volunteer workers must complete the New Hope Employment/Authorized Volunteer Application and Disclosure Form. Such form should also include statement of faith and request three personal references. Persons must have at least 6 months experience with our congregation before being considered for a volunteer position.

In the case of potential employees, the references and previous employer information will be checked as given on the Application and Disclosure Form. If the applicant is offered the position, he/she will be asked for a complete set of fingerprints for a criminal background check. A background check needs to be renewed after every five years of continuous service. Any sensitive information revealed during a background check will be considered confidential and addressed on a case-by-case basis.

### **Training and Levels of Children & Youth Workers**

Staff and Volunteer Leaders/Coordinators are Level I and MUST be fingerprinted and have background check. All other volunteers are Level II and they must complete the Application and go through acceptance but do not need background check or fingerprinting. Under no circumstances should Level II persons violate the two-person rule except perhaps in an emergency situation.

All Staff and Volunteers, after acceptance, must successfully complete Child Protection Training & Verification including any programs of enrichment as made available by the church.

Staff and Volunteers, once approved (Application reviewed and okayed including talking with references; Going through training and passing test; and Background check if required), are given an ID badge that must be visible on their person at all times when serving in children's or nursery-related capacity.

**NEW HOPE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
Child Abuse/Neglect Report Form**

To be completed immediately upon witnessing or becoming aware of an incident of child abuse, neglect, or injury taking place on church property, facilities under the New Hope's direction or jurisdiction, or involving New Hope church staff in the course of church related activities.

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary person/s alleged to have been involved: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe incident:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of witnesses: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe any immediate action taken: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Reporters' signatures: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Outcome/resolution/further action:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix A**  
**NEW HOPE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
**TWO-ADULT RULE EXCEPTION REPORT**

*This report is to be used when 2-adults (one over the age of 21) are not present during any official, scheduled and public New Hope activities involving youth and children*

<b>Ministry Leader/Volunteer's Name:</b>
<b>Name of Leader or Staff Member Notified:</b>
<b>Parents/Guardians Contacted:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <b>If No, Explain</b>
<b>If Yes, Identify Name of Parent/Guardian Contacted:</b>
<b>Date/Time/Method Parent/Guardian was Contacted :</b>
<b>Parent/Guardian Signature (necessary on all long-term exceptions)</b>
<b>Location of Incident/Session:</b>
<b>Date of Incident/Session:</b>
<b>Name of Someone in the area/facility that was made aware of the exception:</b>
<b>Brief Description of Incident/Session:</b>
<b>Name of Other Person(s) who Knew About the One-on-One Session</b>

**Prepared By:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Submit Form To:** \_\_\_\_\_



**Appendix B**

***New Hope Youth Ministry***  
**Permission & Medical Form**  
**2016-2017 School Year Programming**

Student Information

State condition of student's: ears \_\_\_\_\_ sinuses \_\_\_\_\_ heart \_\_\_\_\_  
 Is student subject to: fainting spells? \_\_\_\_\_ heart trouble? \_\_\_\_\_ food allergy? \_\_\_\_\_  
 medication allergy? \_\_\_\_\_ sleepwalking? \_\_\_\_\_ epilepsy? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Has student had appendix out? \_\_\_\_\_ Is student a diabetic? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Does student have any handicaps that would greatly hinder him from entering into full program activities?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ If so what? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Can student swim? \_\_\_\_\_ advanced? \_\_\_\_\_ beginner? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Any restrictions or special medical attention needed (*physical, psychological, etc*)? If so, please list:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Has student had a tetanus shot? \_\_\_\_\_ Date? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Any special dietary needs? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hospitalization Policy: \_\_\_\_\_

***Make a copy of your insurance card and submit with this form.***

Policy Issued under name of: \_\_\_\_\_

**By signing this agreement, I give my permission for my son or daughter to receive medical attention in the event of an emergency.**

I give consent to medical and surgical treatment as needed in the judgment of the treating physician chosen by representatives of New Hope United Methodist Church. I also give New Hope United Methodist Church and its representatives permission to transport my child at their discretion in case of emergency. Lack of cooperation with policies will result in a student returning home at parent's expense. I certify to my knowledge that my child has not been exposed to any contagious disease within the past 30 days.

**Signature of Parent or Guardian** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency phone # where I can be reached: Day \_\_\_\_\_ Night \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate emergency phone # and person: Name \_\_\_\_\_

Day \_\_\_\_\_ Night \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix C**  
***New Hope Youth Ministry***  
**Transportation Form**  
**2016-2017 School Year Programming**  
(Please initial all that apply)

I allow my child \_\_\_\_\_  
*Child's Name*

\_\_\_\_ 1. To be transported to/from events in vehicles owned by New Hope staff, chaperones, or adult volunteers.

\_\_\_\_ 2. To be transported to/from events held outside of New Hope UMC by the following youth group members:

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

D. \_\_\_\_\_

E. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ 3. To transport New Hope members to/from Church and to/from events outside of New Hope

As the year progresses and more youth receive their driver's licenses a written note and phone call to the advisor is necessary for your child to drive in the car with a member not listed above.

Signature of Parent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Child: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

NHUMC Children & Youth Protection Policy  
**NHUMC CHILDREN & YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY  
COVENANTAL AGREEMENT**

I (*name written*) \_\_\_\_\_ have read the New Hope UMC Child & Youth Protection Policy Manual and agree to follow what is set forth in this document. I am covenanting to be a volunteer in the Children, Youth or Family Ministries. I understand that this is a working document and is intended for the safety and protection of all children & youth that will be served through New Hope UMC.

Signature

Date

**NEW HOPE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
CHILD/YOUTH PROTECTION PROGRAM  
CODE OF ETHICS AND RULES**

In the protection of our children and youth, the following rules of behavior and ethics are to be adhered to by all volunteers and staff members in our child/youth programs.

- 1) Awareness of and adherence to all procedures and guidelines specified in our Child / Youth Protection Policy.
- 2) Smoking or using tobacco products in the presence of minors is prohibited.
- 3) Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal, or illicit drugs will not be tolerated.
- 4) Do not use or tolerate the use of profanity in the presence of minors.
- 5) Those working with children and youth shall not abuse such minors, including:
  - Any direct observations or evidence of sexual activity in the presence of or in association with a minor;
  - Any display or demonstration of sexual activity, abuse, insinuation of abuse, or evidence of abusive conduct towards a minor;
  - Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind between any person and a minor;
  - Sexual advances or sexual activity of any kind to a minor;
  - Infliction or physically abusive behavior or bodily injury to a minor;
  - Physical neglect of a minor, including failure to provide adequate supervision;
  - Mental or emotional injury to a minor;
  - Allow the presence or possession of obscene or pornographic materials at any church-related function;
  - The presence, possession, or being under the influence of any illegal, illicit drugs;
  - The consumption of or being under the influence of alcohol while leading or participating in a church.
- 6) Access to any locked records will be limited to appropriate Staff.
- 7) Update Volunteer Information Form when requested.
- 8) Be willing to submit to background check and/or drug screen upon request.
- 9) Treat all people of all races, religions, ages, and cultures with respect and consideration.

Sign \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **New Hope United Methodist Church Photography/Website/Publications Consent Form**

I hereby give permission for my child's photograph, artwork, poetry or other work produced in conjunction with a church project, Sunday School Class, or programs, to be put on any of the following: New Hope United Methodist Church websites, New Hope publications, or any other publication for the purpose of explaining and/or sharing the church's ministries, in accordance with the policies set forth by the New Hope United Methodist Church.

No child's personal information such as last name, home address or telephone number shall appear on any New Hope United Methodist Church publication.

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This document will be retained by the church office, and will not expire unless request is received in writing per the student's parent/guardian.

**NEW HOPE CHILDREN/YOUTH MINISTRY**  
*Adult Volunteer Application*

***Please complete each question and submit to the office at New Hope UMC. All answers are confidential.***

1. Give a brief summary of your relationship with Jesus Christ. Include (1) when and (2) how you accepted Christ, and (3) what Jesus means to you in your daily life.
  
2. In what area is God working in your life now?
  
3. In what area of your relationship with Jesus do you see a need for growth?
  
4. Describe any previous experiences in the last 5 years, paid or volunteer, related to ministry.
  
5. What do you feel are your spiritual gifts? (examples: hospitality, prayer, counseling, preaching, leadership, etc.)
  
6. What areas of the youth ministry that you would like to explore as a volunteer?
  
7. Why do you want to serve in youth ministry?
  
8. Would you be available, if selected, to meet regularly for discipleship/leadership training and soul-tending times?
  
9. Current or previous Employer
  - a. Name \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Address \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. How long? \_\_\_\_\_

10. I have been a member of this church since \_\_\_\_\_  
I have been a friend of this church since \_\_\_\_\_
11. I have never been found guilty, plead guilty or no contest to a criminal charge involving domestic violence or sexual abuse or neglect of any person or incident.  
True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_ (check one please)
12. I have never been involved in a civil lawsuit concerning any incident. True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_  
If false, give short explanation of lawsuit:
13. I have never terminated my employment, professional credentials, or service in a volunteer position or had my employment, professional credentials, or authorization to hold a volunteer position relating to allegations of any incident. True \_\_\_\_\_ False \_\_\_\_\_
- 14.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE SUBMIT THIS APPLICATION WITH THE NEW HOPE PROTECTION POLICY TO THE OFFICE. YOU WILL BE CONTACTED WITHIN ONE WEEK BY A MEMBER OF THE STAFF-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE.**