

Evangelical Lutheran Church Protection Policy In Church Activities



Evangelical Lutheran Church 115 North 5th Street
Black River Falls, WI 54615 715-284-4213

There are four types of child abuse. Physical abuse is the deliberate physical injuring of a child by an adult. Sexual abuse is the involvement of a child in any sexual act or situation for the gratification or benefit of an adult. Emotional abuse is maltreatment which causes low self-esteem in a child, or undue fear or anxiety, or other damage to a child's well-being caused by such acts as angry fault finding, humiliating and belittling a child for mistakes or failures, and deliberate inattention to a child's emotional needs. Neglect is not providing necessary food, clothing, shelter, health care, psychological nurturing, education or supervision for a child.

Introduction:

The Church Council of Evangelical Lutheran Church adopted the following policies and procedures to help keep our church a safe sanctuary for our children and youth. These policies shall be followed by all professional and volunteer workers at Evangelical Lutheran Church.

A. Screening of Lay and Professional Workers ("Leaders") Lay and professional child and youth activity leaders must go through a standardized screening procedure, overseen by the Evangelical Lutheran Personnel Committee. Leaders shall be informed of the rules they are required to follow in all activities and shall sign a commitment agreeing to do so.

B. History of Sexual Misconduct Any adult who has been convicted of sexual misconduct or abuse may not participate in any capacity in Evangelical programs for children or youth.

C. No Sexualizing Adult leaders shall not date or be romantically involved with an Evangelical youth. No sexual behavior is permitted with Evangelical minors.

D. Two-deep Leadership Two adult leaders must be present at each activity with minors unless a parent or guardian given written permission. Exceptions are classes held in rooms with a window in the door, monitored by the paid staff.

E. Individual Consultation Individual consultation between adults and minors must be done within the two-deep framework. In situations that require personal conferences, this should be conducted in the church offices with at least one other approved leader present in the area (though not necessarily in the office). Individual contact on outings must be done in view of another adult or minor. Individual contact outside the church building must occur only in public places and with the prior consent of the minor and parent or guardian.

F. Respect of Privacy Adult leaders need to respect the privacy of minors in all situations (ex. Use of rest rooms, changing into swimming suits, or taking showers) and intrude only insofar as health and safety require. They also need to protect their own privacy in similar situations.

G. Separate accommodations A minimum of two adults must be present at an overnight activity. If participants are both male and female, the adults must be both male and female. If these conditions can not be met, the event will be canceled. On any overnight activity, no minor is permitted to sleep alone in a tent, room, or bed of an adult other than his or her own parent or guardian. Males and females should sleep in separate rooms at events and have separate access to bathroom facilities. When separate facilities are not available, times for male and female use should be scheduled and posted.

H. Appropriate Attire Proper clothing is required at all church activities.

I. Housing When private homes are used for over night events, the program staff member will make final approval of all adults involved as hosts, hostesses and chaperones. At no time may only one child or youth dwell in one home.

J. Transportation Transportation to and from events is primarily the responsibility of the families. During events, drivers should avoid dropping off or picking up minors without being accompanied by another adult. Any deviations should have the prior consent of the parent or legal guardian and be reported to the next person in the line of responsibility.

K. Constructive Discipline When discipline is necessary, it shall be constructive and reflect Christian values.

L. Reporting of Violations of these rules Persons covered by these rules are required to notify the Administrative Pastor of any violations. Suspicions of child abuse occurring during an event shall be reported to the event coordinator immediately. Proper Response Procedures as outlined below will be implemented at once.

M. Response Plan Concern for the alleged victim, good judgment and open communication are the standards surrounding the reporting of an alleged case of emotional, physical, or sexual abuse. This eight-step response plan will be followed:

1. The administrative Pastor will thoroughly and carefully document all the efforts in handling the incident
2. Immediately report the incident to the church insurance company, attorney and the Synodical bishop.
3. Following the professional guidance of the above, contact the proper civil authorities.
4. Notify the parents of the alleged victim or victims.
5. Will not confront the accused until the safety of the child or youth member is secured.
6. Refuse to prejudge the situation.
7. Treat the accused with dignity and support.
8. A written public statement will be prepared for the media and to convey the news to the congregation. Utmost care will be taken to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.

Program staff is responsible for screening and registering people working in church programs, informing them of these guidelines and are responsible for these policies being followed. These policies shall go into effect on August 1, 1999. As of that time, all leaders in Evangelical's activities shall go through the application and screening process. All church programs are open to observation by parents and congregational members.

Evangelical Lutheran Church Protection Policy Within Church Activities

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B. History of Sexual Misconduct

Any adult who has been convicted of sexual misconduct or abuse may not participate in any capacity in Evangelical programs for children or youth.

C. No Sexualizing

Adult leaders shall not date or be romantically involved with an Evangelical youth. No sexual behavior is permitted with Evangelical minors.

D. Two-deep Leadership

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