



First Presbyterian Church of East Avon
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CHILD SAFETY POLICY

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A. PRINCIPLES

Adult retrospective studies show that 1 in 4 women girls and 1 in 136 men boys were are sexually abused before the age of 18 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022).

Only about 75% of sexual abuse is perpetrated by a stranger. (Snyder, 2000).

Approximately 60% of those who have experienced childhood sexual abuse never tell anyone.

We believe that fundamentally, we cannot serve God and disrespect or endanger children. We proclaim that God created all life and following God must lead us to protect the vulnerable among us, particularly children. We also want our church and children's programs to be a place where children are able to grow in their faith and thrive, and parents are supported with safe, high-quality care.

This policy seeks to make explicit standards of care which are already present and ensure that these standards are maintained at all FPC East Avon-sponsored events with children. This policy also requires that any concerns of maltreatment will be treated seriously and given the consideration they deserve.

B. PURPOSE

This policy is intended to:

- Make clear the safe and appropriate practices for adults leading activities with children on behalf of FPC East Avon
- Safeguard children participating in FPC East Avon-sponsored or co-sponsored activities against any maltreatment
- Obtain justice in the event of any maltreatment
- Explain clearly to parents, guardians, and church leaders the steps taken for children's safety during FPC East Avon-sponsored events
- Reinforce the bonds of fiduciary trust between FPC East Avon leaders and the children they care for and educate
- Comply with the Book of Order provision which mandates each council adopt and implement a child safety policy, and regarding Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) mandated reporting of abuse
- Exercise wise and prudent risk management and fulfill our fiduciary responsibility as stewards of FPC East Avon as a not-for-profit corporation under New York State law

C. GLOSSARY

accidental injury – is an unintentional injury/wound requiring the administration of first aid and/or treatment by a licensed medical provider, e.g., cut, allergenic insect sting, broken bone, or burn.

child – refers to any person under the age of 18.

childcare provider – refers to any person who provides childcare and leadership during a FPC East Avon-sponsored event. A childcare provider must be 5 years older than the oldest child participant.

corporal punishment – is the use of physical force (including spanking) which results in a child being hit or struck by a person who is not the child's parent or guardian and is in a position of authority or responsibility at an FPC East Avon-sponsored event.

employee – refers to individuals who are hired or called by FPC East Avon to work for salary or wages.

In loco parentis -- a Latin phrase that means "in the place of a parent". It describes a legal duty where an adult or organization takes on the care, supervision, and responsibilities of a child.

maltreatment – refers to an act, or failure to act (neglect) which:

- creates a substantial risk of imminent physical, mental, or emotional injury or harm
- causes physical, mental, or emotional injury or harm
- endangers the welfare of a child
- constitutes sexual abuse of a child

organizer – refers to any person who plans a FPC East Avon activity or event which includes children, whether as an employee or volunteer; although these people might not directly come into contact with children, they are responsible for ensuring that all *supervisors* who lead FPC East Avon activities or events involving children are aware of and abide by this policy.

FPC East Avon-sponsored – refers to any activity, program or event involving children which is planned, organized and/or conducted by the FPC East Avon or any of its officers, staff members, committees, or boards.

FPC East Avon co-sponsored – refers to any activity, program or event involving children in which FPC East Avon or any of its officers, staff members, committees, or boards participates in the planning, organization and/or conduct of such activity, program or event with another entity

supervisor – refers to any person who is leading a FPC East Avon-sponsored or co-sponsored activity or event involving children, whether an employee or volunteer; a *supervisor* is responsible for the health, safety, education, and wellbeing of the children participating in the activity or attending the event. A supervisor must be at least 5 years older than the oldest participant and a minimum of 18 years of age.

volunteer – refers to any person who provides services to FPC East Avon and receives no remuneration or monetary benefits; volunteers include persons elected or appointed to serve on boards, committees, and other groups.

D. SCOPE

1. This policy applies only to events, activities, or programs involving children which are *sponsored or co-sponsored* by FPC East Avon, where FPC East Avon is operating in loco parentis.
2. This policy applies to: people who plan, organize, or lead any FPC East Avon event in which the FPC East Avon is operating *in loco parentis*; *supervisors* and *childcare providers* at the events; parents whose children are being supervised by others at FPC East Avon-sponsored events, activities, or programs; staff of FPC East Avon and its congregants.
3. In the case of co-sponsored activities, events, or programs in which FPC East Avon is operating in loco parentis, FPC East Avon (or its applicable officer, staff member committee

or board) shall advise the other organization or group of this policy, and that the FPC East Avon will require, as a condition of its co-sponsorship, that this policy be observed, except to the extent that the other organization or group may have a similar policy which is more restrictive or which is designed to address the specific or unique circumstances of the location in which such activity, event, or program is conducted.

4. This policy shall be reviewed by the Youth and Children's Ministries committee every three years, with any needed revisions recommended to the session.

E. CODE OF CONDUCT

All *volunteers* and *employees* at any FPC East Avon event or activity that includes children must also abide by a code of conduct that emphasizes the following prohibited behaviors, including but not restricted to:

1. Display of sexual affection toward a child.
2. Use of profanity or off-color jokes.
3. Discussion of sexual encounters and personal information.
4. Dating or becoming "romantically" involved with children or vulnerable adults.
5. Using or being under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, tobacco/vape product, cannabis or any illegal drug in the presence of children.
6. Possessing sexually oriented materials—including printed or online pornography—on church property or property being utilized for a church event.
7. Asking children to keep secrets.
8. Staring at or commenting on children's bodies.
9. Engaging in inappropriate or unapproved electronic communication with children.
10. Working one-on-one with a child in a private setting. Any one-on-one communication with a child must be observable and interruptible.

F. PRACTICES

The following practices are measures to be applied to ensure child safety and eliminate opportunities for maltreatment of children during FPC East Avon-sponsored or co-sponsored events.

1. At no point shall an adult be alone with an unrelated child, including during transportation in a vehicle or using the bathroom. Ways to permit confidentiality and privacy without sacrificing safety are listed in item 6 of this section.
2. At no point shall any child be alone with another child, including using the bathroom. Using the "Rule of Three" is a required practice.
3. A minimum of two *childcare providers* (one must be a *supervisor*) must be present at all events.
4. FPC East Avon will adhere to ratios recommended by the New York State Department of Health: for children 5-8 years of age, there shall be one adult caregiver for every eight children. There shall be at least one adult caregiver for every 10 children aged 9-17.

5. The *supervisor* is responsible for communicating to parents and guardians of the location in which their children will be supervised. Communication is required to be in writing- email, text, and/or printed documents are all acceptable forms of communication.
6. All indoor activity rooms or areas must have doors with windows or Dutch doors; alternately, doors must be left open. Anyone passing an activity room must be able to see into the room at all times.
7. Confidential discussions with minors shall be conducted with open doors or a door with a clear window, at times when other adults will be nearby and aware, where the conversation is observable and interruptible.
8. *Supervisors* and *childcare providers* are responsible for ensuring that appropriate safety precautions are followed during activities (helmets during a bike ride, gloves during construction service project, etc.). This includes adherence to state or local laws.
9. If medication could or will be needed during a FPC East Avon event, parents/guardians are responsible for completing the Medical Information and Medication Forms (see Attachments C and D). Supervisors will dispense medication as directed according to the Medication Form. *Supervisors* will keep any medication provided by parents in a safe place inaccessible to other children. If any medication is considered a controlled substance, the medication must be locked at all times. Medical Information and Medication Forms (Attachments C and D) shall be accessible to *supervisors* and *childcare providers* during the event and shall be destroyed afterward. *Supervisors* and *childcare providers* are strongly encouraged to have current certification in CPR and First Aid Training, and Medication Administration, Narcan training, and Boundary Awareness Training.
10. No children will possess, or have access to, cannabis, illegal drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vape products, or weapons. In the event of non-compliance, the offending child may be sent home at their family's expense.
11. One-to-one online contact or text messaging between children and the adults who supervise them should be avoided to the greatest extent possible. Youth leaders shall utilize group texting apps (like WhatsApp, Remind, Signal) and send group emails. A parent, guardian, or other leader shall be copied into every email, text message, or other message that a child receives.
12. Technology will not be used to bully others or view or send explicit violent, sexual, or obscene material, either by children, youth, *supervisors*, or *childcare providers*. In the event of noncompliance, the offending child may be sent home at their family's expense.
13. Any act of maltreatment of a child entrusted to the care of FPC East Avon, whether it is committed by an adult or minor, is strictly prohibited.
14. A first aid kit must be accessible to *supervisors* or *childcare providers* at all times.
15. No photographs of anyone under the age of 18 shall be taken and/or published by FPC East Avon without written permission from parents.
16. Any act of *corporal punishment* as a means to discipline, correct, or control a child entrusted to our care is strictly prohibited.
17. Any adult *childcare provider* at a FPC East Avon event must provide written documentation of background check that includes a DMV search (if the provider will be driving children), conducted within the past three years by Praesidium, Inc. (praesidium.com) or an organization recommended by the PC(USA).
18. If transportation during a *presbytery-sponsored* or *co-sponsored* program, event, or activity is provided, the event *organizer* shall take appropriate steps to ensure that the vehicle operators are at least 21 years of age and have valid drivers' licenses, and that the vehicles have valid

registrations and insurance. All vehicle operators must comply with all traffic laws, including use of cell phones while driving. All vehicle operators should also be informed that if their vehicle is used, their insurance would be primary if an accident occurs.

19. This policy and the supplemental “Child Safety Resources” document shall be distributed by the event *organizer* to all people who plan and lead such events, including *supervisors* and *childcare providers*. Acknowledgement of receipt shall be required (see Attachment B, “Acknowledgement of Receipt”) for parents/guardians, *supervisors*, and *childcare providers*. Acknowledgement forms will be kept by FPC East Avon for three years after the event and then destroyed.
20. Before FPC East Avon commits to co-sponsoring an event involving children with another organization or group, the event *organizer* shall obtain a completed and signed copy of Attachment E.

G. INTERVENTION PROCEDURES

The following procedures require the response of any *supervisors*, *childcare providers*, or event *organizers* upon discovery, or receipt of either a verbal report or a written allegation, of any *accidental injury* to or *maltreatment* of children.

In the event of any *accidental injury*

1. Emergency medical treatment shall be administered as needed, in the determination of a *supervisor* or *childcare provider*.
2. *Childcare providers* shall immediately notify a *supervisor*.
3. The *supervisor* shall immediately notify the child’s parents or guardians of any case of injury requiring medical treatment.
4. The *supervisor* shall immediately notify the event *organizer* of any case of injury requiring medical treatment.

In the event of any *maltreatment*

1. If a *supervisor*, *childcare provider*, or event *organizer* discovers or has a reasonable concern that a child may be in danger or abused in another context, they shall contact the NY State Child Abuse Hotline (see Attachment A, “Resources for Reporting Maltreatment of Children”).
2. If there is a reasonable concern that a child was maltreated during a FPC East Avon-sponsored or cosponsored event, activity, or program, whether by an adult or another child, the following shall apply:
 - a. Emergency medical treatment shall be administered as needed, in the determination of a *supervisor* or *childcare provider*.
 - b. *Childcare providers* shall immediately notify a *supervisor*.
 - c. The *supervisor* shall immediately notify the child’s parents or guardians of any case of *maltreatment*.
 - d. The *supervisor* or event *organizer* if present shall notify the NY State Child Abuse Hotline immediately (see Attachment A, “Resources for Reporting Maltreatment of Children”).
 - e. The *supervisor* shall immediately notify the event *organizer* of any case of *maltreatment*.

Violation of Policy by a *Supervisor or Childcare Provider*

1. If any items in the “Practices” section of this policy are violated by *supervisors* or *childcare providers*, they may be sent home immediately at their own cost and replacements may be found as needed. Parents of children at the event will be notified of the change immediately.

Violation of Policy by a Child

1. If any items in the “Practices” section of this policy are violated by a child, they may be sent home immediately at their parent/guardian’s cost.

Post-event action after *accidental injury* or an allegation of *maltreatment* of children

1. The *supervisor* of an event shall submit a written report to event *organizers* after any allegation of *maltreatment* or *accidental injury*. In the instance of any submission of written information involving a minor, the person who receives the report shall promptly inform the Pastor, and/or Clerk of session, who will report to the insurance carrier and the session. Disclosure to civil authorities is required if there is an allegation that an illegal action (such as child abuse or neglect) has occurred (see Attachment A, “Resources for Reporting Maltreatment of Children”).

Attachment A

Resources for Reporting Maltreatment of Children

In the case of a reasonable concern that a child may have been maltreated, harmed, or is in danger, immediately call the NY State Child Abuse Hotline at **1-800-342-3720** (24 hours/day, 7 days/week).

If you are uncertain about calling the civil authorities, you may review the situation with trained human services providers at a resource below (information was updated 08/28/17).

1. During standard business hours, Monday-Friday, If your concern regards a child in:

Monroe County	Genesee, Livingston, Orleans, or Wyoming Counties	Ontario County
Bivona Child Advocacy Center 585-935-7800 Rochester	Justice for Children Child Advocacy Center 585-344-8576 Batavia, Albion & Warsaw	Child Advocacy Center of the Finger Lakes 585-394-2573 Canandaigua

2. 24 hours/day & 7 days/week, If your concern regards a child in:

Livingston, Monroe, or Ontario Counties	Genesee or Orleans Counties	Genesee, Orleans, or Wyoming Counties
Lifeline (Finger Lakes Region) 211 or 585-275-5151	Care and Crisis Helpline 1-844-345-4440 585-344-4440 (based at YWCA, Batavia)	2-1-1 WNY 211 or 1-888-696-9211 (based at Olmsted Center for Sight, Buffalo)

3. 24 hours/day & 7 days/week, for any congregation in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

Abuse Prevention Helpline 1-866-607-7233 (SAFE) Staffed by Praesidium, Inc.
(based in Arlington, Texas)

For information regarding the **Abuse Prevention Helpline** and other services available to PC(U.S.A.) congregations:
<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/Is-YourChurch-Safe-Brochure.pdf>

Attachment B**Acknowledgment of Receipt**

I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the FPC East Avon's Child Safety Policy, and the Child Safety Resources document. I have read the policy, understand its meaning, and agree to conduct myself in accordance with the policy. I authorize the obtaining of emergency medical treatment as required.

Signature
Printed Name
Date
Relationship:

Parent

☐

Event Supervisor

☐

Event Organizer

☐

Adult Childcare Provider

☐

Phone Number
Email

Name of Event, Activity, or Program
Date of Event

Child's Name (if applicable)

Attachment C**Co-Sponsor's Agreement to Observe FPC East Avon Child Safety Policy**

I hereby acknowledge that, as an authorized representative of _____

(*name of organization or group**), I received a copy of the FPC East Avon's Child Safety Policy, and the Child Safety Resources document, as of the date indicated below. I have read the policy, understand its meaning and intent, and understand and acknowledge that the observance of this policy is a condition of the co-sponsorship by FPC East Avon of the activity, program or event as identified below, and agree that such policy will be observed, except to the extent that this organization or group uses a similar policy containing practices which are better suited for achieving FPC East Avon's purpose. If our organization or group's policy will be used, I have attached a copy to this form, and indicated which of our specific portions will apply.

Signature

Name

Name of Organization or Group*

Date

Name of Activity, Program or Event

Phone Number

Email

*[*includes individual churches, presbyteries and synods, or other independent religious, charitable, educational or not-for-profit organization or group.]*

Attachment D (2 pages)

Youth Group Registration and Medical Release Form September 2026 – August 2027

Participant's Full Name: _____

Birthday: _____

Participant's Email Address: _____ School Grade Level _____

Allergies/Special Health Conditions:

Medications and Dose Information:

Parent/Guardian Info:

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Address: _____ Email Address: _____

Participant's Primary Care Physician: _____ Phone Number: _____

Medical Insurance Carrier: _____ Membership ID: _____

Name of Primary Insured: _____ Relationship to Participant: _____

Additional Emergency Contact Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

I certify that the youth named above is in good health and I consider them capable of participating in youth group events. I agree to them taking part in these activities whenever they attend youth group gatherings. In the event of an accident, I consent to any necessary medical treatment which might include the use of over-the-counter medications, adhesive bandages, and/or disinfectant products. In an emergency I consent to treatment by medical health professionals, if considered necessary.

_____ I give permission for photos/video to be taken for the purposes of social media, press releases, etc.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Youth Group Covenant September 2026-August 2027

Participant's Name _____

I understand that whenever I participate as part of the East Avon PC Youth Group, I am electing to enter its community. I will assist the leadership of all events in creating a safe, welcoming, and affirming atmosphere free of any conduct that threatens mental, physical, emotional, or sexual harm or abuse. To this end, I pledge to abide by the standards of behavior established by the leadership as set forth in this Community Covenant:

- I will abide by all the rules and regulations set forth by the leadership, including:
 - always following the rule of three people (never two people of any age alone together)
 - not using electronics during worship, Sunday School, and Youth Group discussion times
 - participating in fundraising events
- I will notify leadership immediately in the event of any conflict, accident, or emergency.
- I will behave in a manner that respects the person and property of everyone with whom I come into contact. This includes avoiding hurtful or exclusive language, physical violence, or physical or sexual contact which may be inappropriate or misunderstood.
- I will not possess/use illegal drugs at any time nor consume alcohol.
- I will not possess or use fireworks, firearms, or any other weapons (including concealed knives).
- I will respect all boundaries around the use of phones for call, texts, and social media.

I have read this Community Covenant. I understand and accept these standards as stated herein and I agree to be bound by them.

Signature _____ Date _____

As a parent/guardian, I give my permission for my child to attend youth group events. I have reviewed this Community Covenant, agree to its terms, and can attest that my child has read and signed this agreement.

Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Attachment E (2 pages):**Child Media & Photo Release Policy September 2026-August 2027**

FPC East Avon frequently captures photographs, video recordings, and digital media of church activities, worship services, youth events, and community programs. We value the privacy and safety of all children and require parental or legal guardian consent before publishing or using a minor's likeness in church media.

Media Usage Categories

By signing this form, you grant or restrict permission for FPC East Avon to use your child's photograph, video image, or audio recording in the following ways:

- **In-House Media:** Display within church facilities, internal newsletters, bulletins, password-protected membership portals, or church-only slide presentations.
- **Marketing & Print Materials:** Printed brochures, flyers, direct mail campaigns, banners, or local print publications promoting church programs.
- **Public Social Media & Website:** Official church social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram) and the public church website to highlight ministry activities and community life.

Terms & Conditions

1. **Identification:** Children will generally not be identified by their full name in public marketing or social media posts without additional explicit consent.
2. **Duration:** This consent remains valid for the duration of the child's involvement with the church's youth and children's programs for the stated year, or until a written revocation is submitted to the church office.
3. **Revocation:** You may revoke or update this consent at any time by submitting a written notice to office@eastavonchurch.com. Revoking consent will not affect media already printed or published prior to the receipt of the notice.
4. **No Financial Compensation:** Photographs and videos are captured on a volunteer basis, and neither the child nor the guardian will receive financial compensation for their use.

Please review the options below, complete the child and guardian details, and check your preferred level of consent.

Child's full name: _____ Child's birthday: _____

Please select ONE option below:

- ☐ Full Consent (All Categories): I grant permission for my child's photo/video to be used In-House, for Marketing, and on Social Media/Website.
- ☐ Limited Consent (In-House & Print Only): I grant permission for my child's photo/video to be used strictly for In-House and printed Marketing materials. Do not publish my child on public social media or the website.
- ☐ No Consent (Opt-Out): I do not grant permission for my child's photo or video to be used in any church media, marketing, or social media posts. (Note: The church will make reasonable efforts to exclude your child from group

Parent/Guardian Printed Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____