

Overview and Format

The purpose of this Policy Summary Document is to summarize the guidelines of the [Policy for the Protection of Children of the Diocese of Christ our Hope](#) and indicate how this policy will be implemented at Bread of Life Anglican Church. As a church under the authority of the diocese, we recognize the diocesan policy as our guide. What follows is a summary of what that policy lays out.

This Policy Summary is divided into five sections, which indicate the various levels of responsibility we have toward protecting the children of Bread of Life.

1. Screening
2. Training
3. Interacting Guidelines
4. Monitoring, Responding, and Reporting

1. Screening

All staff, vestry members, and volunteers working with children must:

- A. Complete an [Application to volunteer with children](#), which must be reviewed by a responsible staff person, who will also check the personal references provided by the applicant.
 - Note: Any volunteer (non-staff) must be a member of Bread of Life for a period of six months prior to applying to work with children. This requirement may be waived by a pastoral reference from a pastor at a previous church.
- B. Successfully pass a criminal background check.

Per our diocesan guidance, we may elect to implement a Social Media screening in the future as an additional measure to screen potential volunteers.

It is the responsibility of the rector or other staff to whom it may be delegated to keep records of these applications and background checks on file in the church office or in an appropriately secure electronic location.

2. Training

All staff, vestry members, and volunteers who would work with children must be *certified*. This means they must:

- A. Complete an **In-Person Training** session on our Child Protection Policy

- B. Complete a **Digital Awareness Training**, *Safeguarding God's Children*, provided by Praesidium at the expense of the diocese.

These training requirements must be renewed every two years. It is the responsibility of the rector or other staff to whom it may be delegated to keep records of these training sessions on file in the church office or in an appropriately secure electronic location and to share them regularly with the Deanery and Diocese as needed.

3. Interacting Guidelines

The diocesan Child Protection Policy and training provides extensive guidance on appropriate interaction with children. Among those guidelines are the following key principles are central:

- A. **The 2:1 Rule** - Children should never be left alone with one adult. There must always be at least two unrelated certified adults present with children in ministry or childcare situations. This rule governs all that follows.
- B. The **Minimum Allowable Ratio** of certified adults to children is 1:10.
- C. **Restroom Policy** - Certified adults may occasionally need to help children access restrooms. In such cases, the 2:1 Rule should be followed, with a second adult in close, visible proximity to the assisting adult. Children who are able to use the restroom without assistance should never be accompanied into the stall or to the toilet. *Adults should make every effort to not be physically involved with children in the bathroom.* In the event that a child needs help in the bathroom that cannot be accomplished except by physical assistance, a second certified adult must be present. To effectively implement these guidelines, it may be necessary on occasion to call for the assistance of a third (certified) helper with bathroom needs. Any adults who accompany a child to the restroom are responsible to promptly notify the parents or guardian of the child that this has occurred and of any issues encountered.
- D. **Supervisory Plan** - For each type of Children's Ministry situation (e.g. "Sunday School" or "Children's Worship," a supervisory plan must be created and kept handy on the site where the ministry is happening. These plans provide situation-specific guidance. Examples of these plans are in the diocesan policy guide.

These guidelines are not exhaustive. As new ministries for children and youth develop at Bread of Life, this Policy Summary will need to be updated to become more specific.

4. Monitoring, Responding, and Reporting

- A. **Monitoring** - It is the responsibility of the entire community of the church to protect children. It is especially the responsibility of clergy, staff, and the vestry to promote a

culture of awareness of and protection against child abuse. This includes urging the congregation to be aware of our child protection policies and asking for their help to uphold them. Members of the congregation must be encouraged to take action if they suspect children are not being adequately protected. It is, moreover, the specific obligation of clergy and staff, and, above all, the rector, to periodically review the practices and staffing of children's ministry with a view toward ensuring the safety of children.

B. **Reporting** - Under our policy, clergy and all children's ministry volunteers are mandatory reporters. Such persons, if they have a reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect (including those to whom abuse or neglect has been reported by a child), are obliged to follow these steps:

1. Attend to the immediate needs (physical and emotional safety) of the child.

2. Notify, in this order:

- a. Tompkins County Child Protection Services (607-274-5610)

- b. The rector

If the issue implicates the rector, [notify the diocese of Christ our Hope at at this link](#) immediately after contacting CPS.

Detailed guidelines for proceeding after a Report has been made (including directions regarding the rector's responsibility to the diocese, insurance companies, the congregation, and the wider community) are outlined in the diocesan policy.

C. **Responding** - Anyone with a concern for child safety may, at various times, have concerns that do not rise to the level of Reporting outlined above but which, nevertheless, should not be ignored. There are two routes for responding in such circumstances:

1. Any person, at any time, may bring a concern to the rector or other church leadership discreetly. In such instances, the congregant may be guided by the rector (or person to whom the rector delegates responsibility for overseeing this process) to submit a [Parish Incident Report](#). While the report must be submitted by the concerned individual, it may be submitted anonymously. This report will be reviewed carefully by the rector and the senior warden, who are responsible for taking any necessary action and/or sharing any contents of the report with appropriate ministry leaders for the sake of conference and safeguarding. If no action is needed, the report should be kept in a secure, confidential file. It should not be discarded but consulted, as needed, as future incidents or new situations arise. If a report implicates a member of the clergy, the bishop should be contacted immediately.

2. Anyone can report a complaint directly to the diocese online at <https://adhope.org/about-us/safeguarding-our-churches/>.

While congregants are encouraged to talk with the rector and vestry to help resolve uncertainties about how to proceed, a dedicated team at the diocesan office is ready to respond to any issues in our church. Moreover, **the bishop may always be appealed to directly by anyone** for assistance and guidance.