

# St. Martin's Lutheran Church and School Child Protection Policy

St. Martin's Lutheran Church and School are committed to providing in all activities and gatherings a healthy atmosphere for the growth and development of the children she serves. Therefore, child abuse, the neglect or mistreatment of a child, will not be tolerated. These protections are afforded to all children we serve, member and non-members. For the purposes of our policy, children shall be considered all those who are under the age of 18 and those who are older than 18 but are currently enrolled in or attending High School. All staff, volunteers, and group leaders will be required to review the "Protection Policy" and sign a statement of willingness of comply. Where abuse is witnessed or suspected the staff, volunteers and members of St. Martin's will immediately report such activity or suspicion to the **Winona County Community Services (507) 457-6500** and/or the **Winona County Law Enforcement Center (507) 457-6368 or 911**.

The Child Protection guidelines for the conduct of staff, volunteers, and others using the facilities of St. Martin's Lutheran Church and School are as follows:

1. Staff, volunteers and other adults should not be alone with a single child where he or she cannot be observed by others.
2. Children are not to be left unsupervised.
3. Staff, volunteers, and other adults shall not abuse or mistreat children in any way, including but not limited to:
  - a. Physical abuse: striking, spanking, shaking, slapping, etc.
  - b. Verbal abuse: humiliating, degrading, threatening, teasing, etc.
  - c. Sexual abuse: touching, speaking inappropriately, etc.
  - d. Mental abuse: shaming, withholding kindness, being cruel, shunning, etc.
  - e. Neglect: withholding food, water, or basic care, etc.
4. No type of child abuse will be tolerated. Any abuse by staff, volunteer or other adult will be reported as stated above immediately. It will result in disciplinary action, up to and including the termination of employment, or the termination of the volunteer position or the termination of privileges to be present on the properties.
5. Profanity, inappropriate jokes, displays of intimate affection, sharing of intimate details of one's personal life, and any other kind of harassment in the presence of children shall be treated as abuse.
6. Staff and volunteers shall not single out any individual children for favored attention and including the giving of gifts.
7. Staff and volunteers will not date nor enter into a romantic relationship with those who are under the age of 18 or currently enrolled in or attending High School.
8. Children may not be disciplined by use of physical punishment.
9. Children are not to be released to anyone who is not authorized by the parent or guardian to pick up the child.

10. Staff members are to supervise the use of the restroom and assure that rest room is not occupied by suspicious or unknown individuals before allowing children to use the facilities. Staff members will stand in the doorway of the restroom when accompanying children to the rest room. {This allows for privacy for the child, necessary supervision and protection for the staff member.) When accompanying a younger child in need of assistance, the doors to the facility must remain open and accessible.
11. No child, regardless of age, should be allowed to enter a bathroom alone on a field trip or at an off-site activity. With children who do not require assistance children should be sent in groups of three and, whenever possible accompanied by a staff member.
12. Staff and Volunteers are to report to Winona County Community Services (507) 457-6500 and/or the Winona County Law Enforcement Center (507) 457-6368 or 911 and to their supervisor anyone who violates any of these child protection policies.
13. Staff and volunteers are required to fully cooperate with any investigation by St. Martin's, Winona Community Service, or Law Enforcement agencies. Failure to do so is considered misconduct and will result in the termination of employment, or the termination volunteer position or the termination of privileges to be present on the properties.
14. Staff and volunteers are required to read, sign and agree to comply with all policies, relating to the protection of children, identifying, reporting, and documenting child abuse and to attend training on the subject as required by the administration.

I have read and reviewed the Child Protection Policy of St. Martin's Lutheran Church and School and understand the requirements for me to report any witnessed or suspected child abuse to the appropriate authorities. I further understand my responsibility to report any violation or suspected violation of this policy to my supervisor and pledge willing to comply with St. Martin's Lutheran Church and School Child Protection Policy.

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*(staff/volunteer signature)*

*(date)*

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*(supervisor/reviewer signature)*

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