



Eugene Friends Church adheres to the Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends (SCYMF) Safeguarding Policy. The Safeguarding policy outlines the reasons we are strongly committed to child protection as well as the procedures we adhere to in order to make our building and interactions safe for children, youth, and vulnerable adults. Although all material contained in the Safeguarding Policy should be read and understood by everyone who has contact with children at Eugene Friends Church, this document serves as a quick reference to summarize the policy contents. The policy in its entirety is available on the SCYMF website at:

**[www.scymfriends.org/safeguarding-policy](http://www.scymfriends.org/safeguarding-policy)**

- The SCYMF Safeguarding policy provides the framework for best practices in prevention, as well as the legal and ethical responsibilities of our staff, volunteers, board and others working with children to respond appropriately to any suspected or disclosed abuse of a child or youth. The practices described in the policy are for the protection of the children and youth we serve, and for the dedicated staff and volunteers who make our programs possible.
- Legal definitions of abuse are specific and vary by State. Read through your state's legal definitions to better understand the legal responsibilities and implications of child protection under state law, and what one is required to report to authorities. For the purposes of this policy, "abuse" includes all harm done to children or vulnerable adults, and is not limited to these legal definitions.
- Anyone 18 years of age or older who has satisfied the requirements of the Safeguarding Policy will be considered an Approved Adult. An Approved Adult can be an employee or non-employee of the congregation, and may or may not be considered a mandated reporter under their State's laws. Regardless, under Sierra-Cascades policy, all Approved Adults are required to report suspected abuse to State authorities.
- All Approved Adults must: pass a background check; acknowledge receipt of and read the SCYMF Safeguarding Policy and verify commitment to adhere to the policy; attend an initial training that includes prevention, identification, and response to all forms of abuse and neglect, compliance with all mandated reporting laws, issues of power, and healthy boundaries. Periodic refresher training will be required.
- Two unrelated Approved Adults should be present during any church sponsored children/youth activity.
- When children/youth are transported for activities away from the church, they shall be transported in groups with at least one Approved Adult in each vehicle. Drivers must be at least 18 years old and have a copy of their driver's license and proof of insurance on file in the church's office.

- Compassionate listening, a kind word of encouragement to a child/youth, praise, positive reinforcement for hard work or acts of kindness, or a physical expression such as a pat on the shoulder, a “fist bump”, etc. can be small but significant acts in nurturing children and youth. If gifts or prizes are given, they should be given openly (not in secret), they should be of small monetary value, and should be given without favoritism. Observation and naming of spiritual gifts is an important form of affirmation that the church community should practice with people of all ages.
  - Touch beyond the above expressions such as hugs should generally only be initiated by children, not adults. Avoid full body hugs with school age children and older.
  - Always respect a child’s refusal of touch. This models important lessons about respect for body boundaries.
  - Encourage older children who ask to be held on your lap to sit beside you instead.
  - Holding a child on your shoulders, horseplay involving physical touch, or tickling is not appropriate. Even when no harm is intended, it can violate boundaries or be misconstrued by the child or an observer.
  - A touch on a body area that would be covered by a bathing suit, a kiss on the mouth or neck, a sexually suggestive joke or comment, patting the buttocks, and encouraging children to do these things to each other are examples of inappropriate and harmful behaviors that should be reported to Pastor and Safeguarding Representative.
- Churches should keep a record of the children and youth in our program(s) when under our supervision.
- Staff and volunteers should be easily identifiable by using lanyards, nametags, or other form of identification which allows children, youth, and parents to know who they can talk to should an emergency or safety issue arise.
- All activities/meetings with children/youth must be conducted in a way that allows visibility, e.g., glass areas of doors should not be obstructed, curtains/blinds should be open, when possible, doors should be open, or a window should allow easy observation of the room. Where possible, conduct activities in a public place, with another person within sight and sound of the activities.
- In general, children/youth should be encouraged to use the bathroom before and after classes or other activities. If you need to take a child to the bathroom, be aware of your visibility and the child’s privacy, e.g., adult stands holding public bathroom door open while child enters the toilet stall alone.
- Approximately 50% of child sexual abuse is perpetrated by another child of either gender. Do not send two or more children/youth to a non-private bathroom, shower, or a locker room unaccompanied. An Approved Adult should go with them and stand by the public door as described above.
- After an activity or event, check rooms to ensure that all participants have vacated the room and spaces not currently in use should be locked.

- Children and youth will have adequate supervision when using electronic devices belonging to the church. Devices should have adequate password protection. Each user should have their own account and password.
- Bullying by anyone is prohibited. Bullying is typically used by individuals or groups with greater power or social status to control or harm others, and includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.
- Children should not be exposed to environments where there is access to alcohol, drugs, weapons, or other dangers.
- Individuals who have been adjudicated by a court or child protective services findings as sexual offenders and/or have admitted to past sexual abuse or crimes and are willing to abide by the guidelines set forth in this policy are welcome to attend worship services and adult educational activities within the limits of state law, following approval of their request to participate by the Safeguarding Committee and subsequent signing of a covenant. Known offenders must refrain from contact with children, youth, or vulnerable adults.
- There are clearly defined, extensive guidelines by which any known offender may participate in the life of the congregation. These include: disclosure of known offender status; notification to the Safeguarding Committee and church elders; development of a covenant specific for the individual offender which is to be signed by the offender after approval by the Safeguarding Committee of their request to participate, and prior to attending a worship service or church function; notification to the church body. After this the known offender will have a designated chaperone at all church functions, attend counseling, and regularly check in with the Pastor and Safeguarding Committee representative.
- Under Sierra-Cascades policy, all Approved Adults are required to report any suspected abuse or neglect to State authorities and inform the Sierra-Cascades Safeguarding Representative and the local church Pastor (or designated Person in Charge). We encourage others in the church community to report if they suspect abuse.

Please read the entire Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting of Friends at:

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