

**Speedway United Methodist Church
Protection Policy for Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults**

I. Introduction

The Indiana Annual Conference and Speedway United Methodist Church, as a member of this conference, is committed to the well-being of every person entrusted to its care as well as those entrusted to the care of local United Methodist Churches in all of Indiana. Our calling is to provide safe sanctuary for all of God's people including our children, youth and vulnerable adults. Indiana United Methodists affirm that all children, youth and vulnerable adults have the right to expect safe sanctuary.

Jesus taught that *"Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me," (Mark 9:37 NRSV)* and *"If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones... it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea." (Matthew 18:6 NRSV)*

The Social Principles of the United Methodist Church state that " ...children must be protected from economic, physical, and sexual exploitation and abuse." 2012, The Book of Discipline paragraph 162 C.

At each child's baptism, we affirm our responsibility to their safety by our congregational response, pledging: *"With God's help, we will so order our lives after the example of Christ, that this child, surrounded by steadfast love, may be established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal." (From The Book of Worship, Baptismal Covenant, Congregational Pledge II)*

As Disciples, we affirm Christ's commandment to love our neighbors. We also serve as witnesses of Christ's power to transform lives. Building on these foundations, we recognize that our faith calls us to offer hospitality and protection to all persons.

II. Definitions

1. **Neglect.** A child or vulnerable person's physical or mental condition is seriously impaired or endangered as a result of the inability, refusal, or neglect of a parent, guardian, or custodian to supply the person with necessary food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education or supervision.
2. **Abuse.** A child or vulnerable person's physical or mental health is seriously endangered due to injury by the act or omission of a parent, guardian, or custodian.

3. **Sex Abuse.** A child or vulnerable person is the victim of a sex offense (rape, criminal deviate conduct, child molestation, exploitation, seduction, sexual misconduct with a minor, public indecency, prostitution or incest). For purposes of this policy, sex abuse is also defined to include possession or viewing of obscene, explicit, or pornographic material in the proximity of a child or vulnerable person.
4. **Ritual Abuse.** Abuse in which physical, sexual, or psychological violations of a child are inflicted regularly, intentionally, and in a stylized way by a person or persons responsible for the child's welfare.
5. **Staff.** Includes any clergy person or paid employee of Speedway UMC.
6. **Volunteer.** Any non-clergy lay worker who is responsible for the care, instruction or supervision of children, youth or vulnerable adult participants.
7. **Participants.** Children, youth, or vulnerable adults who are registered, enrolled, attending or otherwise participating in an event or activity sponsored by Speedway UMC.
8. **Speedway UMC Event.** Include ministries or events planned and supervised by the appointed staff and/or volunteers of Speedway UMC.
9. **Protected Persons.** Include children, youth and vulnerable adults.
10. **Vulnerable Adults.** Persons over 18 years of age with physical, mental and/or developmental disabilities.
11. **Children.** Persons 0-12 years of age.
12. **Youth.** Persons 13-18 years of age.

III. Criteria for Staff and Volunteers

1. **Age Requirement.** Adults and youth are able to serve as volunteers. Volunteers under the age of 18 must work with and under the supervision of an adult volunteer. In all cases, volunteers and staff must be at least five years older than the oldest child or youth that they are responsible for supervising.
2. **Background Checks/Screenings.** Background checks will be obtained by Speedway UMC. Volunteers and Staff must complete the Background Check Form.

A background check is required at the beginning of volunteer service and a new background check will be required if there is a break in service of more than one

year. (Background checks cannot be conducted for those under the age of 18.)

Background checks on continuous volunteers and staff will be obtained every three (3) years. A background check must be completed prior to working with children or youth.

Staff/volunteers from outside of the United States of America or without a social security number for whom a background screening cannot be completed, must be verified by reference checks and allowed to work under the supervision of a properly certified adult.

No applicant with a criminal conviction for any crime against a person, including but not limited to crimes against or including children, sexual misconduct or use or abuse of alcohol or drugs may serve in any capacity that involves direct contact with or supervision of children, youth or vulnerable adults.

IV. Statement of Covenant

Safe Sanctuaries Participation Covenant Statement

The congregation of Speedway UMC is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children, youth, vulnerable adults, workers and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the Speedway UMC. The following policy statements reflect our congregation's commitment to preserving this church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who would enter, and as a place in which all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others.

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers, clergy or lay, who have contact with or responsibility for children, youth, or vulnerable adults at Speedway UMC sponsored events.

1. No adult who has been convicted of child abuse (either sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, emotional abuse, or ritual abuse) will be allowed to volunteer to work with children, youth or vulnerable adults in any Speedway UMC sponsored activity.
2. Any person who is the object of a "REPORT OF SUSPECTED INCIDENT OF CHILD ABUSE" will be required to refrain from all children and youth activities until it is determined if further action shall be taken.

- 3.** Adult volunteers with children, youth or vulnerable adults shall observe the "Two Adult Rule" at all times so no adult is left alone with children, youth or vulnerable adults on a routine basis.
- 4.** At any meeting or classroom setting with children or youth, if the door doesn't have a window or the top half of door isn't open, the door shall remain open for the entire session. Ideally, the meeting will be conducted at a time when others are nearby, even if they are not within listening distance.
- 5.** Adult volunteers working with children, youth or vulnerable adults shall complete an annual training session provided by Speedway UMC to keep volunteers informed of church policies and state laws regarding child abuse.
- 6.** Adult volunteers shall immediately report to the Pastor (or in the absence of the Pastor, a designated supervisor any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.
- 7.** Members and constituents must have attended Speedway UMC for a period of 6 months before working with children and youth.
- 8.** Speedway UMC has a Hall Monitor Program when one adult is alone with a group of children. A person or persons will randomly come and check in on the classroom. The Hall Monitor will record the date, time and their name on the Hall Monitor Form. These random checks may take place more than once.
- 9.** If a child needs help using the restroom, the parent or responsible person will be contacted to take the child to the restroom.
- 10.** In order to protect the children, youth, vulnerable adult, church worker or volunteer, a church worker or volunteer will not be left alone with a child out of sight or hearing of another adult.

Protection Covenant for Speedway United Methodist Church

I have read the Child, Youth and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy of Speedway UMC, including the Response/Reporting Procedures. I support and abide by these guidelines fully and completely.

As a volunteer/employee (check all that apply)

1. I agree to observe and abide by all church policies established to protect children, youth and vulnerable adults as I serve in all ministries of the church.
Yes _____ No _____
2. I agree to observe the "two-person rule" at all times. Yes _____ No _____
3. I agree to observe the "open door policy" at all times. Yes _____ No _____
4. I have been given a copy of the Child, Youth and Vulnerable Protection Policy.
Yes _____ No _____
5. I understand that it is mandatory that I complete all current and future requirements of the Speedway UMC Child, Youth and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy and the Indiana requirements for Child Protection.
Yes _____ No _____
6. I am trained and certified in First Aid. Yes _____ No _____
7. I am trained and certified in CPR. Yes _____ No _____

By signing below, I hereby verify the information above is true and accurate.

Signature of Volunteer/Employee

Date

V. Reporting Procedures For Speedway UMC Child, Youth and Vulnerable Adult Protection

Policy

Reporting Procedures

Indiana law requires a person to immediately report suspected child abuse to the legal authorities, and in organizations such as Speedway UMC, to the appropriate individual in charge. A person who fails to report can be prosecuted for a Class B misdemeanor, or in extreme circumstances, may be subject to civil liability for monetary damages.

Indiana law provides immunity from any civil or criminal liability that might be imposed for any individual who makes a report of child abuse, provided that person has not acted maliciously or in bad faith.

Therefore, all employees and volunteers at Speedway UMC must adhere to the following procedures:

- In the event of suspected or discovered child abuse or violations of the Protection Policy of Speedway UMC, the employee or volunteer shall immediately notify the Pastor, or in the absence of the Pastor, the designated Supervisor.
- In the event of suspected or discovered child abuse, an employee or volunteer will also immediately complete the "Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse" form. See *"Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse"*.
- In the event of suspected or discovered child abuse, the Pastor, or in absence of the Pastor, the designated supervisor shall immediately make a report to the local Child Protective Services Agency.
- Reports by the Pastor to Child Protective Services shall be documented in writing with the date of the report, the time of the report, the telephone number to which the report was made, the name of the recipient of the report and a brief synopsis of the report.
- If at all possible, all oral reporting will be done in the presence of a recorded witness. See *"Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse"*.

Response Procedures

The official spokesperson for Speedway UMC shall be the Pastor, or in the absence of the Pastor, the designated supervisor. All inquiries or requests for information from the media, attorneys or any other parties shall be referred to the official spokesperson. No person other than the official spokesperson is to release any information regarding the alleged incident of child abuse without the expressed written approval of the official spokesperson.

The official spokesperson shall immediately report any alleged incident of child abuse to the appropriate local Child Protective Services Agency of Marion County, our insurance carrier, and the District Superintendent.

See *"Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse"*.

The care and safety of the victim is our first priority. We will not confront the accused without the approval of the Child Protective Services Agency or law enforcement authorities.

We will not prejudice any person accused, but we will take any allegation of child abuse seriously and will reach out in Christian love and support of the victim and the victim's family, extending whatever pastoral care resources are needed. We will fully cooperate with any authorities investigating an allegation of child abuse.

We will treat the accused with dignity and respect. If the accused is a church employee or volunteer, that person shall be temporarily relieved of their duties until the investigation is complete and the person has been cleared by the authorities, or until criminal charges are resolved.

All communications by the official spokesperson to the media, congregation and public will protect the privacy and confidentiality of all involved.

All efforts in responding to the alleged incident of child abuse shall be documented by the Pastor, or in the absence of the Pastor, by the designated spokesperson, and maintained in a secure and confidential file.

REPORT OF SUSPECTED INCIDENT OF CHILD ABUSE

Report of Observer

1. Name of worker (paid or volunteer) observing or receiving disclosure of child abuse.

2. Victim's name _____

3. Victim's age/date of birth _____

4. Date/place of initial conversation with/report from victim.

5. Victim's statement (give observer's detailed summary of incident here)

6. Name of person accused of abuse: _____

7. Relationship of accused to victim (paid staff, volunteer, family member, other):

8. Reported to: _____

Date _____

Time _____

Summary

Signature of Person making Report of Incident

Date

Report of Pastor

The following actions will be taken by the Pastor and reported on this form:

1. Call to victim's parent/guardian

Reported to: _____

Spoke with _____

Date _____

Time _____

Summary

2. Call to local children and family service agency (Child Protective Services)

Reported to: _____

Spoke with _____

Date _____

Time _____

Summary

3. (If Deemed Necessary) Call to local law enforcement agency:

Reported to: _____

Spoke with _____

Date _____

Time _____

Summary

4. Other contacts such as Insurance Carrier and District Superintendent

Reported to: _____

Spoke with _____

Date _____

Time _____

Summary

Signature of Pastor

Date

VI. Annual review of Speedway UMC Protection Policy for Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults

1. The Pastor and the Leadership Team will review the Protection Policy prior to September of each calendar year.
2. All Records (Training Attendance, Background Checks and Reports of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse) will be maintained in the administrative office of Speedway UMC. Background Checks and Incident Reports will be kept in a manner to preserve confidentiality.
3. Records for volunteers and staff will be reviewed annually, prior to September of each year to ensure that all personnel have updated background checks and have attended annual training session.
4. Annual training shall include but not be limited to, the following elements:
 - familiarization with this policy
 - recognizing the signs of abuse
 - avoiding situations when abuse might take place, or contact which could be perceived as abusive
 - reporting requirements of the State of Indiana related to abuse
 - the policy for responding to an allegation
 - communication of procedures

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR ABUSE PROTECTION POLICY

24 Hour Hotline for Indiana Child Abuse and Neglect: 1-800-800-5556

Indiana Child Protective Services website:

<https://secure.in.gov/dcs/contact-us/child-abuse-and-neglect-hotline/>

Marion County Child Protective Services

Address:

2629 Waterfront Parkway East Drive

Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46214

Region: 10

Regional Manager: Peggy Surbey

Local Office Director: Justin Tillis

Telephone Number: 317-968-4300

Fax Number: 317-232-1813

Office Hours: 8AM-4:30PM

Speedway United Methodist Church

5065 W. 16th St.

Speedway, IN 46224

sbradley@speedway-umc.org

Pastor G. Thomas Jones

317-241-1563

Gthomassenoj@speedway-umc.org

Leadership Team Chair

Margie Ellison

317-679-0764

Maellison88@yahoo.com

CENTRAL DISTRICT

301 Pennsylvania Parkway, Suite 300

Indianapolis, IN 46280

Office Hours:

Monday – Friday 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM

Conference Superintendent:

Aleze Fulbright

ds.centraldistrict@inumc.org

Associate Superintendent

Michelle Knight

michelle.knight@inumc.org

Conference Assistant

Greg O'Connor

greg.oconnor@inumc.org

Office: [317.924.4140](tel:317.924.4140)

Toll-Free: [877.781.6707](tel:877.781.6707)

Fax: [317.924.4007](tel:317.924.4007)

central.district@inumc.org

Speedway Police Department

5300 Crawfordsville Rd

Speedway, IN 46224

317-246-4300