

CHILD SAFETY GOVERNING POLICY

**Peace Lutheran Church
Dresser, Wisconsin**

Background

Child sexual abuse is a serious concern in our society and in many churches. Acknowledging the broken and sinful nature of our world, we accept it as our responsibility to provide as safe an environment as we can for our children and everyone who works with them.

Therefore, Peace Lutheran Church has established the following Statements of Purpose, Covenant, and Policies which, when taken together, constitute the congregation's Child Safety Governing Policy. An additional booklet is available from the Church Office which specifies the procedures, forms, and training materials used to implement the Child Safety Governing Policy at Peace Lutheran Church.

Statement of Purpose

Peace Lutheran Church's purpose for establishing a Child Safety Governing Policy is to demonstrate our absolute and unwavering commitment to the physical and emotional safety and spiritual growth of our children and those who work with them.

Statement of Covenant

As a Christian community of faith and a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we, the members of Peace Lutheran Church, pledge to conduct the ministry of our congregation in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of our children and those who work with them.

Toward that end, we commit ourselves to:

- Follow established procedures in the selection and recruitment of employees and volunteers who work with children;
- Implement procedures which minimize the risk of sexual abuse to children;
- Educate our employees and volunteers who work with children about our Child Safety Governing Policy and the procedures associated with it;
- Make it known in the congregation that all the members of Peace Lutheran Church are an essential part of providing a safe environment for our children;
- Make copies of our Child Safety Governing Policy readily available;
- Follow clearly defined procedures for reporting a suspected incident of child sexual abuse that conforms to the requirements of the law; and
- Be prepared to respond to inquiries from the general public, the media, and/or members of the congregation if an incident of child sexual abuse occurs.

Statement of Policies

1. Peace Lutheran Church will provide to all new members, as part of the New Member Orientation Meeting, a copy of the Child Safety Governing Policy.
2. Peace Lutheran Church will employ a screening program for all employees who work with children and are likely to be in potentially high risk situations with them. Examples of this would include employees who participate in mission trips and overnight events with children.

3. Peace Lutheran Church will employ a screening program for all volunteers who work with children and are likely to be in potentially high risk situations with them. Examples of this would include volunteers who participate in mission trips and overnight events with children.
4. Peace Lutheran Church requires that all screened employees and all screened volunteers have at least three references checked.
5. Peace Lutheran Church requires that all screened employees and all screened volunteers sign a release for a criminal background check.
6. It is Peace Lutheran Church's policy that no one with a known record who has been convicted of a sexual abuse crime of any kind will be allowed to work with children.
7. To ensure a safe environment for our children and to protect those who work with them from false accusations, Peace Lutheran Church will use a "two adult rule" for designated activities with children.
8. To ensure that the Child Safety Governing Policy has been effectively implemented, members of the Parish Relations Ministry will periodically review the policy and conduct training events for the employees of the congregation and the volunteers who work with children.
9. To provide added safety, all rooms in our church's building, except bathrooms and storage closets, will have windows in their doors.
10. Peace Lutheran Church encourages the use of its facility by visiting organizations and opens its doors to organizations which need space for events involving children. To ensure the safety of all children, Peace Lutheran Church requires that visiting leaders abide by the Child Safety Governing Policy.
11. Child sexual abuse is criminal behavior that involves children in sexual behaviors as defined by state and federal law. All employees and volunteers who work with children at Peace Lutheran Church are required to immediately report any concerns related to suspected incidents of child sexual abuse to the Parish Relations Ministry Chairperson, the President of the Church Council, or the Senior Pastor.
12. In responding to a suspected incident of child sexual abuse, Peace Lutheran Church will work with appropriate government agencies in a prudent manner to ensure the safety and dignity of the suspected victim and the person who has been accused.
13. Following the report of a suspected incident of child sexual abuse, Peace Lutheran Church will follow established procedures when responding to inquiries made by the general public, the media, and/or members of the congregation. First and foremost, these procedures will protect the rights of the suspected victim, as well as the rights of the person who has been accused.

Adopted by the congregation of Peace Lutheran Church on January 30, 2005