

ILLINOIS SOUTH CONFERENCE POLICIES FOR PREVENTION OF ABUSE OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND ADULTS

General Policy Statement

Every child and every family has the right to expect Illinois South Conference to be a safe place free from abuse. Abuse of a child or young person by an adult is inappropriate use of the adult's authority or position in order to gain excessive power or intimacy with the child or young persons. These guidelines are an attempt to prevent abuse and protect children, adults working with children and Illinois South Conference.

Policy for Screening Volunteers and Staff

1. Staff and volunteers must complete an application form including references. The application form for volunteers is to be signed by a representative from their local church.
2. Volunteers must be a member of a local church for six months or a friend of the church for one year.
3. All persons are to be evaluated for fitness to work with children and youth by supervising staff person. Criteria can include background checks, reference checks and interviews.
4. Staff and volunteers must consent to reference checks and background checks.
5. Persons known to be convicted of child abuse or molestation are never to be allowed to work with children or youth.

Policy for Response to Alleged Abuse at Illinois South Conference Events.

1. Reporting
 - a. Take seriously any allegations
 - b. Persons in caretaker rolls are mandated to report abuse. Report allegations promptly to designated staff person which can include adult advisers, event coordinator, summer camp director, conference minister. Director of Dubois Center, nurse, or camp staff. It is the responsibility of the person receiving the report to share the information with the immediate supervisor.
 - c. Designated staff person reports allegations to appropriate persons and agencies including:
 - (1) Criminal authorities
 - (2) Department of Children and Family Services
 - (3) Conference attorney and insurance company
 - (4) Person to whom allegation was made
 - (5) Victim's families (except when alleged perpetrator is a family member)

2. Responding

- a. Support the alleged victim and families
- b. Confidentiality is to be observed, limiting dissemination of information only to those individuals who must be informed. (See 1. Reporting, c.)
- c. Designate a Crisis Communication Team who will communicate in an official capacity for Illinois South Conference with authorities and media.
- d. Utilize an attorney and victim advocate from local sexual assault unit or State's Attorney's office during any interview or investigation.
- e. Temporarily relieve the accused person of duties until investigation is completed.
- f. Arrange for pastoral and psychological care for both the victim and the accused after official investigation has begun if requested.
- g. Use professionals to investigate allegations.

Forms Available, but not part of policy

1. Employed and Volunteer Application Form
2. Alleged Abuse Report Form

Approved by Illinois South Conference Board of Directors, May 8, 1996