



CROSSROADS  
Presbyterian Church  
*To know Christ and bring others to Him*



***Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them;  
for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs.***

***— Matthew 19:14***

## Contents

Plan Objective and Objectives .....	2
General Requirements and Overview.....	2
Worker and Helper Requirements and Screening Process .....	3
Worker and Helper Training and Commitments.....	4
Child Safety Team.....	4
Paid and Volunteer Worker Monitoring Plan. ....	4
Staff to Child and Student Ratio .....	4
Standards of Conduct .....	5
Discipline Guidelines - Positive Corrective .....	6
Release of Minors.....	6
Reporting/Consequences .....	6
Transportation Guidelines.....	7
Overnight Guidelines.....	7
Youth Ministry Electronic Communication Policy .....	8
Children and Family Ministry Electronic Communication Policy .....	8
Acknowledgment .....	9

## Plan Objective and Objectives

At Crossroads Presbyterian Church (“Crossroads”), we are committed to the safety, welfare and protection of all children, ages birth to 18 years old (“Minors”), and the adults, whether volunteers or staff of Crossroads, involved in the care and nurture of those children and youth (“Workers”). This Child Protection Plan (“Plan”) is also intended to safeguard any individual with a cognitive and/or physical disability regardless of their age. For the purposes of this Plan, it will be assumed that these individuals will be afforded the same expectations, respect and protections defined in this Plan for the group termed as “Minors”.

A critical distinction is made between persons having “substantial contact” with Minors and persons who volunteer and interact with Minors on an isolated or infrequent basis and always under the supervision of a Crossroads staff member. For the purposes of this Plan, these persons are referred to as “Helpers” and must meet a lower but appropriate protocol. Examples of groups that may recruit “Helpers” include, but are not limited to, the Crossroad Preschool and MOPS groups. Helpers who volunteer in Crossroads Preschool are subject to additional State requirements as outlined in the Preschool Volunteer Guideline Document. Persons whose service or activities put them in substantial, on-going, or frequent contact with Minors, described throughout this document as Workers, must complete each step of the Requirements and Screening Process.

The Plan is aimed at minimizing the risk to Minors of being exposed to any form of unacceptable conduct, including, but not limited to, neglect, abuse, or harassment, whether physical, mental, sexual, or verbal, by any of the Workers while on church property or while engaged in church-sponsored activities or programs. Even though the risk of such conduct can never be eliminated, Crossroads is committed to taking proactive measures to prevent it.

Crossroads as a Presbyterian Church USA congregation must adhere to the Book of Order in addition to this plan. Should violations of this plan occur, Crossroads will follow not only civil law, but church law as set forth in the Book of Order.

The Book of Order states, “The congregation as a whole, on behalf of the Church universal, assumes responsibility for nurturing the baptized person in the Christian life,” and Presbyterians believe this baptismal commitment to be a serious one, understanding it apply to all in the church’s care, including children, youth, and vulnerable adults, (BOO W-2.3013)

## General Requirements and Overview

The following provides an overview of the key aspects of the Plan and the general guidelines that are applicable to all ministry functions involving Minors.

1. A minimum of two approved, unrelated Workers must be assigned to supervise or lead all group activities involving Minors; if the two Workers are related, a third approved worker will also be assigned with co-supervisory responsibilities. This requirement is referred to as the “two-worker rule.” The rule does not apply to:
  - a.) Small group activities, consisting of multiple groups being conducted simultaneously on church property and led by one Worker per group. During these activities group leaders may receive assistance from a high school student member of Crossroads.
2. Guidelines related to one-on-one meetings between Workers and Minors are as follows:
  - a.) Meetings must be in a setting open to public view: if in a classroom, the door must remain open.
3. Hybrid Option: One of the two Workers may attend a hybrid meeting remotely via Zoom. The remote worker must be logged on throughout the entire meeting, or as long as there are Minors present.
4. Planned one-on-one meetings over lunch, coffee, etc. must be held in public places and may only occur if:
  - a.) Prior approval has been given by the Minor’s parent or guardian; and,
  - b.) A program staff member, Pastor or supervisor has been notified of the planned meetings.
5. Parental or guardian permission must be given in advance when a Minor and a Worker are in a situation where a second Worker is not present, such as (but not limited to) a tutoring situation or mentoring relationship.
6. A Medical/Release form signed by a parent, guardian or by any participating young adult 18 or over is required for all programs and activities outside the regular classes and meetings on the Church property. Included, but not limited to; overnight retreats, off-campus service trips or fellowship activities, and out of town trips.

7. Doors to classrooms must be kept open whenever possible and may only be closed if there are windows from the classroom into the hallway with an unobstructed view of the classroom.
8. Minors should not be allowed to leave a class or ministry activity unattended.
9. Restroom supervision guidelines for elementary and preschool children are as follows:
  - a.) Before allowing children into the restroom, Workers will make sure suspicious or unknown individuals are not occupying the restroom.
  - b.) Workers will stand in the doorway while children are in the restroom, allowing privacy for the child and protection for the Worker. Whenever possible, children should be sent in pairs.
  - c.) If Workers are assisting younger children, doors to the facility must remain open.
  - d.) Only paid Workers will change diapers, which will always be done in an open space.
10. During outdoor activities, when playing outside or on the play equipment Workers are to circulate and watch Minors, giving particular attention to the areas not easily seen from all viewpoints. Any two Minors together in an unseen or less easily viewed area should be redirected to a more open area.
11. After every event or activity, it is the responsibility of Workers to ensure that every room and restroom have been checked prior to leaving the building.
12. At no time shall a Worker pursue a dating or otherwise intimate relationship with a Minor.

## Worker and Helper Requirements and Screening Process

Prior to serving in ministries involving Minors, such as the childcare, preschool or children and youth ministries, volunteer Workers and Helpers must:

1. Demonstrate a personal commitment to Crossroads by being a member in good standing for a minimum of 6 months or by having a child enrolled and actively participating in a Crossroads program for at least one semester prior to volunteering. (Examples of approved Crossroads programs include but are not limited to Sunday School, Youth Group or D Groups).
2. All Workers must be 18 years of age or older. Younger persons may assist adults, but they may not take the place of adult Workers.

**Workers** wishing to serve in ministries involving Minors must complete the Crossroads Screening Process, which includes:

1. **Safety Application:** Crossroads requires all volunteer Workers to complete a Confidential Safety Application. This is not an employment application but serves at the basis for the creation of a safe environment for Minors.
2. **Face to Face Meeting:** All volunteer Workers must meet with a Program leader who will be supervising the specific ministry in which they will be serving. During the meeting, the Ministry leader will share the expectations and requirements outlined in this Plan with the potential Worker and ensure that the Worker has a complete understanding and commits to uphold all aspects of the Plan to the best of their abilities.
3. **Background Checks:** Crossroads requires all paid and volunteer Workers to undergo a criminal background check. An updated background check will be required every two years. Crossroads Child Safety Team will review any convictions discovered on the background check report without discrimination and pursuant to the guidelines established in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Fair Credit Reporting Act. All report results and any discussions will maintain the confidentiality and privacy of the applicant. However, any conviction or pending charges involving homicide; rape; assault; abuse of a child, including but not limited to incest; indecency with a child; inducing or engaging in the sexual conduct or sexual performance with a child are disqualifying factors to working with Minors at Crossroads.
4. **Reference Check:** All Workers are required to provide two references, one professional and one personal.

**Helpers** wishing to serve on a limited and nonscheduled basis must complete a background check.

## Worker and Helper Training and Commitments

On completion of the Crossroads Screening Process, all Workers and Helpers are required to complete the following prior to beginning their interactions with Minors:

1. **Sexual Abuse Awareness Training:** To equip all Workers and Helpers with the information necessary to recognize abuser characteristics and grooming behavior, Crossroads requires them to complete sexual abuse awareness training prior to their interactions with Minors. This training must be renewed every two years.
2. **Volunteer Worker Statements and Agreed Code of Conduct:** Workers and Helpers are required to read and sign this one-time document.
3. **Child Protection Plan:** All Workers and Helpers are required to review this Plan and the policies detailed within it, sign and return the signature page acknowledging understanding and agreement to comply with these requirements. For the electronic version of this policy, an email acknowledgement of completion is acceptable. Each Worker and Helper is required to review and re-sign every two years.

Preschool **Helpers** are also required to read and sign the Preschool Volunteer Guidelines before helping in the classroom.

## Child Safety Team

Recognizing the importance of providing and maintaining a safe environment for Minors, Crossroads will appoint and maintain a Child Safety Team (CST). The purpose of the CST is to enable all Ministries that engage with Minors and individuals with disabilities to carry out appropriate ministry activities while safeguarding their participants from emotional, physical, or sexual abuse. The team shall include the Senior Pastor, Operations Director and staff leadership from the Children and Youth Ministries. The Senior Pastor or Operations Director will facilitate the team's quarterly meetings to review the Plan and assess application, compliance, and updates. In the event of a report of an incident or allegation of misconduct the CST will meet immediately to implement any necessary actions as required. The CST shall also make recommendations to the Crossroads Session regarding child safety concerns or issues. The Senior Pastor will provide a quarterly report to Session.

## Paid and Volunteer Worker Monitoring Plan.

To allow for observation of Worker interactions with Minors, supervisors will make regular (announced and unannounced) visits to each program. This will provide supervisors the chance to identify suggestions and additional training opportunities for Workers. Supervisors will also use the visit for early detection of questionable or inappropriate activities or behaviors. Specific monitoring duties shall include the following:

1. Any Crossroads sponsored activity that has interactions with Minors, especially those having regular programming, such as, but not limited to, Children and Youth Ministries will establish a plan for periodic, but frequent, observations of all group activities and meetings.
2. A Pastor will also conduct unscheduled observations, on a quarterly basis, of these groups and meet regularly with Children and Youth Ministry Directors to discuss compliance with the Plan and any concerns or issues that should be brought to the Child Safety Team.

## Staff to Child and Student Ratio

Crossroads is committed to providing adequate supervision in all Crossroads sponsored activities interacting with Minors. Accordingly, the following worker to child/youth minimum ratios will be observed:

Program	Workers	# of Children or Youth
Nursery	2	8
Preschool, 2 and 3 years old	2	12
Preschool, 4 and 5 years old	2	18
Elementary	2	20
VBS	2	20
Youth Grades 6-8	2	10
Youth Grades 9-12	2	16

## Standards of Conduct

In addition to compliance with specific policies identified in this Plan, all Workers are expected to comply with the following standards of conduct in all situations and interactions with Minors, whether on the Crossroads property or at an event, camp, retreat, or activity that takes place at another location. All Workers should exercise good judgement when expressing themselves through physical touch.

1. Physical expressions of affection should not be excessive or imposed upon the Minor.
2. Hugs should be limited to side hugs or an arm around the shoulder.
3. A brief assuring pat on the head or shoulder is appropriate.
4. Piggyback rides, wrestling with or letting Minors sit on laps is not permitted, encouraging Minors to sit beside a Workers as their as a “seat buddy” is the appropriate.
5. Certain, limited physical care-taking actions, hand washing for example, are appropriate with young Minors.
6. Verbal interactions between Workers, Minors should be positive and uplifting.
7. Workers are expected to refrain from swearing or using profanity.
8. A Worker may not administer medication without prior written parental or guardian authorization, to any Minor while serving in Children or Youth Ministries.
9. Prohibited conduct includes any form of neglect, abuse, harassment, or exploitation whether physical, mental, sexual, or verbal (“Prohibited Acts”).
  - a) By way of example and not limitation, Prohibited Acts involving sexual exploitation of the Minor include any interaction in which the Minor is being used for the sexual stimulation of the Worker or another person. This may or may not include physical contact. Minors cannot consent to such conduct; it will always be considered to be forced, whether or not the Minor has permitted or expressed a willingness to engage in that conduct. In addition, Workers must never: touch a Minor in anger or disgust, tickle, or wrestle with a Minor or ignore a Minors request not to be touched or physically touch any Minor who shows or expresses discomfort with physical touch.
  - b) Prohibited Acts also include acts between Minors and their peers. The Worker should limit the physical space and opportunity for these types of acts between Minors, should interrupt such acts when observed, and should follow the reporting guidelines set out in the Plan.
10. Inappropriate verbal, physical, or emotional bullying between Workers and Minors or between Minors and their peers will not be tolerated.
11. Workers are prohibited from the use, possession, or being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drug while in any church facility, while traveling with or working with or supervising Minors during any Crossroads program or activity.
12. Workers serving in Children or Youth Ministries should never be nude in the presence of Minors in their care. In the event there is a situation that may call for or contemplate the possibility of nudity (i.e., changing clothes during a pool party, weekend, or overnight retreat, etc.), the Worker leading the event will submit a plan to the Children or Youth Directors concerning arrangements for showering or changing clothes.
13. Crossroads requires Workers to abstain from the use or possession of tobacco products on Church property, while in the presence of children, youth, or their parents, or during Crossroad’s activities or programs. Crossroads is a tobacco-free facility.
14. Workers are prohibited from engaging in any sexually oriented conversations with Minors and are not permitted to discuss any inappropriate or explicit information about their own personal relationships, dating or sexual activities with any Minor in the program. In specific, clearly defined situations, where a Minor is seeking counseling or wishes to report inappropriate behavior, Pastoral, Children or Youth Directors may be required to discuss personal, confidential subjects with a Minor.
15. Workers are prohibited from possessing (or transmitting to a Minor) any sexually oriented materials (magazines, cards, images, videos, films, etc.) on church property or in the presence of Minors in their care.

## Discipline Guidelines - Positive Corrective

Crossroads prohibits Workers from the use of physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of Minors. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, biting or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by Minors. Minors are to be disciplined using time-outs and other non-physical methods of behavior management. Verbal interactions between Workers and Minors should never be in a manner that could be construed by any reasonable observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. In employing positive corrective disciplinary procedures, Workers should observe the following guidelines:

1. Strive to help each Minor develop the self-control necessary for consistent, safe behavior.
2. Discipline may never include physical acts or any type of humiliation; Workers must always try to show respect in disciplining students.
3. Ordinarily, a Minor should be dealt with privately (off to the side, but still in public view) rather than in front of the other Minors.
4. In the event of a fight or physical altercation, a worker will verbally redirect the Minors involved, trying to avoid physical intervention.
5. Parents will be informed of the Minor's behavior depending on the severity or repetition of the offense.
6. Uncontrollable or unusual behavior should be reported immediately to the Staff member in charge.
7. The goal of discipline is positive, corrective behavior, not negative punishment.

## Release of Minors

When a Minor has been entrusted to any Crossroads Workers, Crossroads assumes responsibility for the safety and welfare of that Minor. Workers must act to ensure the appropriate supervision and safety of Minors in their charge. All Workers are responsible for releasing Minors in their care only to parents, legal guardians, or other persons designated **in writing** by parents or legal guardians at the close of services or activities. Unless notified about specific individuals who are not authorized to pick up their Minor, it will be assumed that the person who drops off a child for a program or activity also has authority to pick up that child.

Should a situation arise where Workers are uncertain of the propriety of releasing a Minor, they should immediately locate or contact their direct supervisor, the Children or Youth Ministry leaders or another Crossroads director-level staff member, before releasing the Minor.

## Reporting/Consequences

To maintain an environment free of harmful behavior toward all Minors, all Workers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, or situation thought to be a Prohibited Act.

1. Anyone personally witnessing any occurrence of or encountering a situation which presents suspicion of the occurrence of a Prohibited Act must report the situation to a Pastor, the Operations Director, or member of the Child Safety Team. The reporting individual will be asked to complete an incident report.
2. Any report of a Prohibited Act made by a Minor about their care by a Worker or about the actions of another Minor, regardless of whether it seems unlikely, must be relayed to a Pastor, the Operations Director, or member of the Child Safety Team. immediately after being reported.
3. If a Prohibited Act is reported, both the Operations Director and a Pastor must be notified.
4. When a Worker receives a report of an alleged occurrence of a Prohibited Act, the Worker should take the following steps in the interests of the security of the Minor involved and to protect against physical, emotional, or psychological injury to all persons.
  - a. Secure the safety of the Minor(s).
  - b. Report the incident immediately to the Operations Director or Pastor and complete an incident report.
  - c. Avoid personally confronting the Worker or Minor alleged to have engaged in the Prohibited Act.
  - d. The Operations Director and/or the Pastor will take responsibility for reporting the incident to the parent or guardian.

- e. Participate in reporting, to the appropriate State authorities where required by law, the alleged Prohibited Act and/or abuse in conjunction with the Operations Director or Pastor.
5. When a Worker is alleged to have committed a Prohibited Act, the Operations Director or Pastor shall notify the accused Worker, who then will have an opportunity to provide the Operations Director or Pastor with their account of the circumstances and events at issue.
6. The accused Worker will be suspended from any interactions with Minors at Crossroads sponsored activities at least until a determination regarding the validity of the allegation has been made by the Church and/or State authorities.
7. Any person, after investigation, who is confirmed to have participated in a Prohibited Act, as defined under “Standards of Conduct”, on page 5 of this Plan, bullet points 9, 10,11,12,13, 14 and 15 shall be prohibited from future participation in all church-sponsored activities and programs with Minors. If the person is a paid staff member, such conduct will result in termination of employment.

## Transportation Guidelines

Workers may from time to time be required to provide transportation for Minors. The following guidelines must be strictly observed when Workers are involved in the transportation to or from an event or activity:

1. All activities off the church grounds with Minors require the completion of the Medical/Release form by their parent or guardian. Any youth aged 18 years must also complete a waiver.
2. No drivers under age 25 may drive Crossroads-owned or rented vehicles.
3. All Workers who will be transporting Minors in vehicles during any activity must annually complete a volunteer driver form and verify the validity of their driver’s license through the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.
4. When one vehicle is used for an event, the two-worker rule still applies unless parental permission to the contrary is obtained prior to the trip. When several vehicles are taken for an event, keeping the other vehicles in sight is an acceptable substitute for the two-worker rule.
5. Minors should be transported directly to their destination. Unauthorized stops to a non-public place should be avoided. Workers should avoid transportation circumstances that leave only one Minor in transport.
6. Cell phones may not be utilized by the driver while driving their own vehicle or any vehicles owned or rented by Crossroads, unless in an emergency.

## Overnight Guidelines

All Workers and Minors who participate in an off-site camp, retreat or mission trips are required to abide by the specific child protection plans, policies and requirements of the facility, camp, or organization at which they are staying in addition to the following Crossroads requirements and expectations:

1. A Medical/Release form must be completed and signed by a parent or legal guardian prior to all trips. All youth, aged 18 years, must also complete, and sign a waiver.
2. The two-worker rule must be followed throughout the trip with any exceptions clearly stated and approved in advance by the parent or legal guardian or become necessary due to exigent circumstances beyond the control of the Worker.
3. The total number of Workers on each trip will be adjusted according to the requirements of the planned activities.
4. Under no circumstances can one Worker alone take or accompany Minors on an overnight outing.
5. Sleeping arrangements for any overnight stay including for mission trips and retreats should provide, where possible for Minors of the same sex to sleep in rooms under the supervision of two adults of the same sex. Ordinarily, Workers should not share rooms with youth unless sleeping arrangements are one large room for each sex. In that case, Workers must sleep apart from the Minors and, when possible, Workers should sleep within proximity to the door.
6. Appropriately modest sleeping attire must be worn to bed.
7. During bed checks, Workers should never physically touch a camper.

## Youth Ministry Electronic Communication Policy

At Crossroads, our calling is to meet our Youth where they are, model healthy boundaries, and love and care for them safely. To promote safety and to create a healthy environment for texting and electronic communication between its Paid and Volunteer Workers and Minors, the following practices and boundaries should be followed:

1. Parents of Youth will be asked to sign a consent form allowing our Pastors and Youth Workers to have ongoing communication with their Youth, consistent with the boundaries laid out in this policy. This consent gives approval, but also acknowledges the importance of this healthy relationship for the overall effectiveness of Crossroads Youth ministry.
2. Workers should use prudent judgment when considering the time, they contact Youth through social media. The "home phone rule" is do not text, chat, or email back-and-forth with Youth at a time you would not normally call their home phone line (i.e., before 8:00 AM or after 10:00 PM). If a student contacts, a Worker after hours and it is not an emergency – wait until morning to reply.
3. Adult Workers should not submit "friend" requests to Minors or Youth. Youth may not be able to decline such requests due to the disparity of power between Youth and Adults. Youth may ask to be "friends", and Adult Workers should discern the level of contact they want to maintain with Youth prior to responding to these requests.
4. If an Adult Worker chooses to accept friend requests from Minors or Youth who are associated with their community of faith, other adult leaders must have full access to all aspects of that adult's profile and correspondence. Youth should not be tagged in any post or be asked to exchange any personal information over social media by an Adult Worker.
5. All Workers should consider the content and nature of any post that will be visible to Youth and ensure that it aligns with the Mission of Crossroads and its ministries and aligns with the requirements of the Plan.
6. Workers should never transmit any content that is illicit, unsavory, abusive, pornographic, discriminatory, harassing, or disrespectful when communicating with each other or with Minors involved in ministry activities.
7. Transcripts of on-line chats and blogs should be saved whenever possible.
8. Youth Workers should refrain from using video chatting, including apps such as Snap Chap, with a group of students. Zoom meetings, planned Youth group activities using an official Crossroads Zoom account are permitted. One-on-one video chatting is not allowed unless both Worker and Youth are in an open location, where others are able to monitor the interaction. Under certain circumstances the Youth Director may hold private video chats with Youth looking for advice or counseling on personal or confidential issues.

## Children and Family Ministry Electronic Communication Policy

In addition to abiding by the best practices and boundaries laid out in the above Youth Electronic Communication Policy when applicable for those Workers interacting with Minors, these specific requirements address the use of zoom or other video platforms for Ministry meetings or activities:

1. Workers will not meet one on one with a child on Zoom or another online platform unless the child's parent/guardian is present.
2. Group Zoom meetings will use official Crossroads Zoom accounts and will be recorded when only one adult worker is present. The recording will be securely stored with access restricted to members of the Child Safety Team.

## Acknowledgment

I have received and read, and I hereby agree to comply with the guidelines, policies and codes of conduct contained in, Crossroads Presbyterian Church's Child Protection Plan. I state that I am not currently facing charges, nor have I been convicted of a crime involving the types of conduct described under 3. Background Checks of the "Worker Requirements and Screening Process" Section set forth on page 3 of this plan. I recognize that pending criminal charges and past convictions involving the types of conduct specified under 3. Background Checks and/or pending criminal charges and past convictions involving other types of unacceptable conduct would be so related to the circumstances and responsibility of Workers in Crossroads' Ministry involving Minors such that disqualification from working in such a capacity would be appropriate. Accordingly, I agree to submit to a background check via the Ministry Safe process.

Signature:

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Print Name (include middle name):

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Today's Date:

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***Please detach this acknowledgement and return to the church office.***