

Overview of the Friends Meeting of Washington Child Safety Policy

On 13 October 2013, the Friends Meeting of Washington (FMW) Meeting with a Concern for Business approved the Child Safety Policy summarized below. Following this policy is important for all FMW members, attenders, visitors and employees because it provides support in preventing and identifying possible instances of child abuse or neglect; promotes child safety; and seeks to minimize the possibility of baseless charges or unwarranted suspicion of child abuse or neglect being directed to anyone in the FMW Community. The policy also seeks to balance FMW's spiritual needs, child safety concerns, legal requirements and financial and practical limitations. The full policy is available at: [list URL]

The policy sets forth the roles, expectations and requirements relating to child safety at FMW. It aligns with, but takes precedence over, the "Baltimore Yearly Meeting Youth Safety Policy Updated June 15, 2013 at Interim Meeting," which is endorsed by the FMW Child Safety Committee. Further, because most FMW Children's Activities take place on FMW property in Washington, DC, this policy has been written to comply with the District of Columbia (DC) Code. CSC recognizes that if an activity occurs outside of the District of Columbia, additional laws may apply that may take precedence over parts of this policy.

The key aspects of FMW's Child Safety Policy are as follows:

- No child may be left alone or with only one adult other than their parent, guardian or custodian during an FMW Children's Activity or while on FMW property.
- Every FMW Children's Activity must have a minimum of: (a) two (2) or more children; and (b) two (2) or more adults who have been approved by the CSC to work with children (Adult Childcare Givers).
- Doors to all FMW classrooms, childcare rooms and activity areas shall always be open when in use. Parents, guardians, custodians, CSC members and sponsoring Committee members are welcome to visit at any time.
- Childcare givers may release a child only to their parent, guardian or custodian. Childcare givers may not release the child to an unknown adult, older sibling or allow the child leave on his/her own.
- If a child is present but not participating in an FMW Children's Activity, then the child is under the care of their parent, guardian or custodian.
- Any questions or concerns about this policy should be sent to the Clerk(s) of CSC.

Who is affected by this policy?

- ✓ Everyone who participates in FMW activities, but especially those involved in FMW Children's Activities.

- ✓ FMW Activity Coordinators (those coordinating activities aimed at children or that have a significant participation by children e.g. weekend retreats at Catoctin).
- ✓ Adults serving as First Day School (FDS) teachers and assistant teachers.
- ✓ Adults providing care of nursery aged children.
- ✓ Paid FMW employees who work with children.
- ✓ Children 14-17 years of age who are involved with caring for nursery-aged children.
- ✓ Adult volunteers who supervise FMW sponsored overnight events that involve children.
- ✓ Adults driving or chaperoning children (other than their own) in vehicles or by other means to or from FMW-sponsored activities at the request of an FMW Activity Coordinator.
- ✓ Adults who provide one-on-one counseling or mentoring to children.

A. Who is responsible for administering this policy?

The CSC or others who are approved by FMW Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Business are responsible for administering this policy. Other FMW Committees shall consult with the CSC on topics that involve or affect children, children activities or that relate to abuse, neglect or safety issues affecting children.

B. Confidentiality

All information, verbal, electronic, or paper collected in connection with implementing this policy will be kept in the strictest confidence, to the extent allowed by law.