

POLICY ON ABUSE PREVENTION

Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting will take all reasonable precautions to insure the safety of the children and youth at all Yearly Meeting sponsored events. To that end, we will provide appropriate screening of all staff and volunteers working with children and young people.

It is the policy of Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting to follow the procedures outlined below. This policy and procedures apply to everyone who works with children and young people under 18, whether they are 1) paid, 2) compensated by work grants or fee waivers, or 3) volunteers.

1. All applicants for youth and child care positions shall provide three references to the committee clerk or other designated person. Preferably one of the three references should come from a person within the Yearly Meeting and another from a person who has direct experience of the person's work with children. Family members should not be used as references. References will be checked, and written records of reference calls kept on file.
2. Paid staff for the Teen and MY program must be affiliated with or have a thorough knowledge of the Religious Society of Friends. Children's Committee members will provide Quaker education instead of requiring paid childcare workers to have an affiliation with the Religious Society of Friends. This shall be verified by references or active participation in a monthly meeting.
3. All youth workers and others who will have supervisory roles (youth secretary, middle youth coordinator, members of Teen, Middle Youth, or Children's Committees). or who will have overnight responsibility for children or young people (Friendly presences, parents), or who may be alone with young people (volunteers), will consent to a criminal and/or child abuse background check. The checks will be performed by the Yearly Meeting Administrative staff unless an applicant can provide a current background check performed by local law enforcement offices or similar database services in other states. The YM Administrative staff will keep records of all background checks and will notify the appropriate committees of any concerns. The checks will be repeated every four years for continuing workers.
4. All information from references, background checks will be held in the strictest of confidence. Files will be held in the Yearly Meeting offices for up to 20 years (until the youngest child reaches majority plus 2 years) in a secure file. Access to these files will be limited to committee clerks and officers of the YM. These files are the property of OVYM. Upon written request to the Yearly Meeting Clerk, workers shall have access to their files except for letters of reference, which are confidential and not available to the worker. The file is not available to others outside of OVYM.
5. Workers who have not undergone the more thorough screening, including "walk in" volunteers, will be supervised at all times. Under no circumstances will these workers be left alone with a child other than their own.
6. Should a committee have a question or concern about information revealed during the screening procedures, they may discuss this information with the applicant and ask for further clarification In the

event the individual is hired, the committee should document their reasons for overriding the detrimental information.

7. All youth workers, including those who have supervisory roles (teen secretary, middle youth coordinator, members of Teen, Middle Youth, or Children's Committees), those who will have overnight responsibility for children or young people (Friendly presences, parents), and those who may be alone with young people (volunteers), shall be trained in abuse prevention prior to working with children or youth. OVYM shall provide at no cost to the youth worker abuse prevention training that meets the standards of our insurance company and Quaker values. There will be an assessment at the end of the training to make sure participants comprehend the content and objectives of the training. Friends in supervisory roles will insure that staff, volunteers and committee members review abuse prevention guidelines (appended) prior to YM events.

8. The abuse prevention training shall take place prior to YM and be coordinated by Religious Nurture and Education. Abuse prevention training materials shall be available year round to youth workers who have met all other qualifications for work with children and youth. In addition, abuse prevention materials shall be available on request to Monthly Meetings. Youth and children's committees will provide, as needed, youth and child care workers with additional procedures, restrictions, and guidelines.

9. Any allegations of abuse will be taken seriously. All such allegations are to be reported immediately to the appropriate supervisor and/or YM Committee Clerk, the Presiding Clerk, and the Assistant Clerk of the Yearly Meeting. Ohio Valley Yearly Meeting shall comply with all legal requirements for reporting of abuse.

10. Policy will be reviewed every three years by Executive Committee in consultation with all youth committees appointed by the Yearly Meeting.

Current Approved by Executive Committee 10/4/2014

Original Approved by Executive Committee 2/02/08 (Adapted from FGC Policy 2004)