

Child Safety Policy

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD WORLD MISSIONS



February 2025

Assemblies of God World Missions is committed to establishing the Church among all peoples everywhere. Part of this mission includes ensuring that each child is healthy and whole and does not suffer harm or abuse. AGWM values children and takes the responsibility of care for children seriously.

OBJECTIVES

By establishing this policy, AGWM aims to reduce the risk of harm to children under its care, including misconduct toward children by AGWM Workers. AGWM expects every individual regardless of age to be treated with dignity, care, and respect. AGWM recognizes its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children within its care by earnestly striving to protect them from harm and seriously addressing concerns and reports of possible child safety issues, which include physical harm, sexual harm, emotional harm, self-harm, and neglect (defined in [Appendix A: Definitions](#)). This policy delineates how AGWM treats children, responds to abuse, and refines its policy.

Strategies

To achieve these objectives, AGWM shall implement the following strategies:

- **Prevention.** Safe recruitment procedures, awareness training, and a code of conduct to provide clear expectations and monitoring of AGWM Workers.
- **Response.** Guidelines for reporting and responding to child safety concerns, disclosures, or allegations.
- **Network membership.** Associate member status with the Child Safety and Protection Network (CSPN).

To demonstrate its commitment to child safety, AGWM has established the role of child safety lead (the “**Child Safety Lead**”) (AGWMchildsafety@ag.org). The Child Safety Lead ([Appendix B: Child Safety Lead Job Description](#)) is responsible for coordinating the AGWM Child Safety Program and to:

- Advocate for AGWM child safeguarding policies and procedures that follow best practices.
- Plan and update relevant safeguarding training for AGWM Workers and families.
- Maintain a clear reporting mechanism for raising concerns.
- Coordinate the Response Team on any concerns of harm to a child.
- Report to the AGWM Executive Director and World Missions Board any AGWM Worker or child who has been confirmed to have abused or harmed a child so that the [AGWM Standards of Conduct for Missionary Workers](#) can be applied if need be.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the primary purpose of any child safety policy is the preservation of the health and safety of the children within the scope of the policy. Accordingly, and even though this policy is intended to and should be followed as closely as possible, under appropriate exigent circumstances the Child Safety Lead and Response Team (in consultation with the relevant Regional Director) and AGWM may take such steps, whether or not such steps are in strict compliance with any specific provision of this policy, they deem, in the exercise of their discretion, reasonably necessary to prevent actual or potential harm to a child.

AWARENESS/SCOPE

Given the nature of AGWM's work, we divide our responses to child safety issues into those that are inside AGWM's sphere of care and those that are outside that sphere of care. Inside the sphere of care are AGWM workers, whether missionaries, contracted workers, staff, or MAPS or AIM volunteers (each, an **"AGWM Worker"**) and their children. Inside this sphere, AGWM upholds the highest standards of care for children. The following will raise concern:

- A child has or may have been harmed or is in danger of being harmed.
- A caregiver has or may have harmed a child or breached the code of conduct or that the caregiver may do so.

In the scope of its work, AGWM may discover harm that has happened to a child's life outside the organization's sphere of care. AGWM does not have the authority to respond to these situations with child safety or misconduct assessments. However, even outside the sphere of care, the following will raise concern:

- Any immediate family member is or may be the agent of a current or historical event of any kind.
- There is or may be current abuse of any kind.
- There is or may be sexual abuse, current or historic.

AGWM Workers are expected to know the laws regarding child abuse in the country where they live and to communicate important information to new global worker team members.

SCREENING

AGWM screens all AGWM Workers through official identity documents, background checks, written references, and specific child safety interviews.

Official Identity Documents. Upon initial application, candidates present a valid government identification to be used in the background check process.

Background Check. AGWM's screening process for career missionaries, missionary associates, and MAPS workers entails a four-tiered background check:

- State and county criminal
- Federal criminal
- Nationwide super search
- Nationwide federal sex offender

If the background check raises concerns, the application will be put on hold while the findings are explored further within AGWM Mobilization and Development and Member Care.

Written References. AGWM may as it deems necessary also solicit written references from persons who know the candidate and may also solicit follow-up interviews or secondary references when concerns are raised in the application process.

Interview. Before a candidate is accepted as an AGWM Worker, he or she is interviewed. These interviews will include child safety questions. For couples, questions concerning child safety will be asked separately to the husband and wife. A representative (but not exhaustive) list of potential questions are attached to this document as [Appendix C: Sample Interview Questions](#).

TRAINING

- All AGWM Workers participate in pre-field safeguarding training. The training ensures that workers are aware of handbooks and policies, including information on how to raise a concern about a child's safety. A record of their completion of this training will be kept on file in AGWM Member Care.

- All AGWM Workers participate in ongoing safeguarding training as part of their clearance to depart for the field. The training includes information on how to raise a concern. A record of their completion of ongoing training will be kept on file.
- All AGWM Workers shall review and sign AGWM Safeguards for Child Safety ([Appendix D](#)) and Child Safety Code of Conduct ([Appendix E](#)) before departing for the field.
- All AGWM Workers are also required to comply with the [AGWM Standards of Conduct for Missionary Workers](#).
- During global worker training, orientation, and renewal events, the AGWM ISMK office shall provide, with parental consent, age-appropriate safeguarding instruction to children. Parents will also be given age-appropriate resources to educate and facilitate conversations with their children to promote child safety and well-being.

All adults, both foreign or local, who work or volunteer in an entity managed by AGWM (team, field, area, or regional gatherings), shall participate in safeguarding training. This includes people such as local partners, childcare workers at conferences, and short-term teams.).

CHILDCARE PROTOCOLS

In any setting where children are present, at least one of the following primary safeguards should be implemented and as many as possible should be followed (see [Appendix F](#) for more). These safeguards are applicable for in-person and online interactions.

Primary Safeguards

- **Visibility.** *Can others see me?* When interacting with children, adults must position themselves in a place visible to other unrelated adults. This can be accomplished by planning activities in areas where other adults are present, staying within view of windows, or keeping doors open.
- **Accountability.** *Do others know where I am or what I am doing? Am I promoting a culture of transparency and accountability?* One-on-one interactions with a child, physically or online, should only occur in situations where other adults are in the vicinity or when a parent has granted permission.
- **Power balance.** *Do children feel safe in my presence?* Adults, by virtue of their age, size, strength, and authority, exert control over children. Balancing control enhances child safety. This can be accomplished by avoiding one-on-one situations as much as possible.

Additional Safeguards

- **Interaction.** Proper understanding of appropriate touch, communication, and discipline supports safe interactions with children.
- **Training for AGWM personnel.** When childcare is being provided at any AGWM team, field, area, or regional function, all individuals providing childcare must have undergone AGWM child safety training and signed the AGWM Child Safety Code of Conduct. No childcare provider, regardless of age or the provider or children in their care, will be left alone with a child.
- **Training for non-AGWM personnel.** During team, area, and regional meetings in which non-AGWM personnel are the childcare providers, AGWM leaders assume responsibility for ensuring that each childcare provider has completed child safety training and signed the AGWM Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- **Child safety risk assessment.** Child safety risk assessments will be carried out for ongoing team meetings and new program activities, as well as the facilities that will be utilized.

RAISING A CONCERN OF HARM

Any AGWM Worker must report alleged harm or abuse if he or she:

- Believes or suspects that there is any child safety concern.
- Receives a disclosure of harm.
- Discovers alleged abuse, regardless of when or where it may have occurred.

The Child Abuse Helpline at 1-417-212-5976 is an available means to raise a concern about harm or potential harm to a child. Even if there is reason to doubt a concern, the concern must be immediately, accurately, and completely communicated. Learn more about the guidelines for raising a concern in [Appendix G](#).

The child will not be asked leading questions during a disclosure of abuse or harm, nor will there be any attempts to navigate the situation independently or perform any preliminary interviews/response.

As much information as possible should be communicated when raising a concern.

First Priority: The Child's Safety

- Is the child currently safe? If not, this must be addressed first.
- It is impossible to know the full dynamics of every situation; however, AGWM shall use its best efforts to take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of the child.

Second Priority: Who, What, When, and Where

- Who is/are the child/children? Who is/are the respondent(s) (the person[s] reported to have caused harm to the child)?
- What happened? Provide as many details as possible.
- When did the relevant actions or conduct take place?
- Where did the relevant actions or conduct take place?

Third Priority: Source of Information

- If the person raising the concern is not the child, not a witness to the abuse or harm being responded to and did not talk directly with the child in question, the person raising the concern will need to provide the name of the individual(s) who initially shared the information.
- The helpline responder shall notify the AGWM Child Safety Lead.
- The AGWM Child Safety Lead shall determine the first two priorities above by following up on this concern and communicating with the person(s) who directly witnessed the abuse or harm or spoke with the child in question.

During the response process, AGWM shall attempt to provide immediate safety and appropriate care for each person involved. Support will be offered to the child(ren), respondent(s), and person(s) raising a concern during and after the response process (see [Member Care](#)).

CHILD SAFETY RESPONSE PROCESS

Inquiry and Reporting

Each incident of harm involving an AGWM contracted worker, volunteer, or child will be responded to by the Child Safety Lead, who shall communicate with the corresponding Regional and Area Director that a concern has been raised and that a response to the concern is occurring.

The Child Safety Lead shall immediately involve appropriate governing authorities. As such, AGWM may file appropriate reports in: (1) Greene County, Missouri, where AGWM's principal office is located, (2) the state and/or country in which the abuse occurred, (3) the state and/or country of residence of the person who is the respondent, or (4) in any other jurisdiction that is appropriate under the circumstances. If it is determined that governmental entities will not respond to the concern raised, then AGWM shall conduct an internal inquiry to determine if the Child Safety Code of Conduct ([Appendix E](#)) was violated. This response will be coordinated by the Child Safety Lead in collaboration/partnership with a response team (the **"Response Team"**) selected by the Child Safety Lead in consultation with the relevant Regional Director.

Response Team and Child Safety Best Practices

The Response Team is comprised of two or three individuals trained in child safety response. AGWM complies with best-practice recommendations for child safety responses, which may include but are not limited to, an initial assessment, a child safety assessment, and a misconduct assessment.

The Response Team, when called upon, is expected to fully respond to all reports of possible harm promptly with objectivity and fairness. A response will include planning, gathering information, analyzing information, and determining outcome decisions.

All AGWM Workers and other personnel, affiliate team members from other organizations, family members, and other persons are expected to cooperate in and to respond to any response activity and requests fully and in a timely fashion. Any person who conceals information, knowingly provides false or misleading information, or who demonstrates a contentious, non-cooperative spirit or other failure to submit to proper authority and leadership in these processes will be subject to appropriate action, up to and including dismissal from continued service with AGWM, under [AGWM Standards of Conduct for Missionary Workers](#) or other relevant standards and processes.

If a concern is raised about someone who is serving on an AGWM team or ministry but is not sent directly by AGWM, a response to this concern will be initiated by the Child Safety Lead.

If a concern is raised about a national harming or abusing an AGWM MK, the Child Safety Lead will be immediately notified and oversee the response.

To provide immediate safety measures and decrease future harm or risk of harm, the respondent will be removed from the AGWM affiliated team, ministry activities, and meeting spaces, pending the results of the misconduct assessment.

The Response Team shall evaluate the needs of the individuals involved.

The Response Team and AGWM leadership recognize it is of utmost importance to refrain from disclosing confidential information to others to protect the privacy of individuals involved in a response and to avoid causing additional harm. AGWM and the Response Team shall use their best efforts to keep all information and documents gathered in the course of any response confidential. Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis, preserving the dignity of all involved. Expansion will occur only as individuals are drawn into the response. Despite this general commitment to confidentiality, during the course of and to conduct properly any response activity, AGWM or the Response Team may be required to share certain confidential information with, among others, potential witnesses or others with relevant knowledge, AGWM personnel, or other similarly situated people, or if required by law or court order or for reasons outside AGWM's or the Response Team's control or for some other reason not currently contemplated.

Interview and Response Outcome

The Response Team shall maintain a neutral stance until the conclusion of the response. During interviews, a Response Team member of the same gender as the interviewee will be present when possible, and every effort will be made to provide a translator if needed.

Unless likely to delay prevention of a risk to child safety or otherwise impossible under the circumstances, two Response Team members will always be present during an interview, one acting as interviewer and the other acting as scribe.

If it is determined that the initial concern was raised out of malice and with no substance, the person who raised the concern will be subject to appropriate action or other relevant standards and processes and AGWM shall use its best efforts to restore respect for the respondent.

If a concern is mistaken or inaccurate but was made in good faith, then the person raising a concern will not be subject to any form of negative repercussion.

If it is found that criminal offenses occurred, then offenses will be reported to the proper authorities. Due diligence will be carried out to identify other potential children harmed.

The child(ren) and his/her parents and the respondent(s) will be provided with a written summary child safety response outcome(s), with appropriate information and instructions (the **“Response Outcomes”**). The person raising the initial concern may, if deemed appropriate in the specific situation and in the discretion of the Child Safety Lead in consultation with the relevant Regional Director, also be informed of the Response Outcomes.

All AGWM Workers are expected to comply fully and in a timely fashion with the instructions included in the Response Outcomes. Any AGWM Worker who does not do so will be subject to appropriate action, up to and including dismissal from continued service with AGWM, under [AGWM Standards of Conduct for Missionary Workers](#) or other relevant standards and processes.

Statement of Findings

After completion of the initial assessment, child safety assessment, and/or misconduct assessment; (a) a full Statement of Findings, including the rationale for decisions (the **“Statement of Findings”**), will be delivered to the AGWM Executive Director or his or her designee, and (b) a version thereof with such information as the Child Safety Lead in consultation with the relevant Regional Director deem in the exercise of their discretion to be appropriate under the circumstances (the **“Third Party Version Statement of Findings”**), to the respondent’s sending organization if it is not AGWM and to the respondent’s credentialing or sending network or district.

Closing the Response

- **Implementation of Child Safety Plan(s).** The Child Safety Lead shall ensure that the Response Team’s recommendations are implemented.
- **Administrative Action.** The [AGWM Standards of Conduct for Missionary Workers](#) may be recommended depending on the results of a misconduct assessment and/or a child safety assessment.
- **Final Communications.** All findings will be documented. Documents may include interviews, records checks, initial assessment, response plan, child safety assessment, child safety plan, misconduct assessment, misconduct findings report, organizational improvement plan, and/or implementation and monitoring of safety and action plans. The Response Outcomes(s), the Statement of Findings, and the Third Party Version Statement of Findings, if any, should be included in response documentation. Records should document all processes and outcomes. Files will be documented and maintained according to AGWM’s normal document retention policies or if no such policies exist at any relevant time, then indefinitely unless otherwise authorized by the Executive Committee.

Except for the Response Outcomes and the Third Party Version Statement of Findings, all other reports, and any other minutes, files, summaries, notes, or other documents or materials prepared in connection with AGWM’s or the Response Team’s activities during the course of, in connection with, or related in any way to the response activities or to the subject matter of the response activities are prepared and intended to be for the relevant Regional Director, for AGWM leadership, and for the AGWM Office for Member Care only and are not intended to and will not be shared with any person other than those persons and such other persons whom the Executive Committee deems appropriate.

- **Organizational Improvement Plan.** The Response Team shall identify ongoing risks and vulnerabilities for AGWM. Changes will be recommended to the Executive Director or his or her designee regarding organizational improvements. The organizational improvement plan will also include recommendations regarding improving the child safety response process.
- **Monitoring of Child Safety Plan(s).** The Child Safety Lead shall regularly monitor any safety or action plans and compliance with Response Outcomes for the recommended time frame and shall document any follow-up activities.

In confirmed cases of abuse or harm, Response Outcomes or other outcome decisions will include the following:

- **Termination.** In every confirmed case of child abuse or harm committed by an AGWM Worker, the Executive Committee shall, regardless of the passage of any statute of limitations, immediately terminate the worker's service with no possibility of reinstatement.
- **Reporting.** In cases where someone, such as a global worker from another agency, has harmed an MK, the AGWM Child Safety Lead reports, where applicable, to the global worker's sending agency, certification agency, and any other appropriate government agency in the global worker's passport country.
- **Denial for Service.** In confirmed cases where a child has been abused or harmed by a national, whether the abuse or harm occurred inside or outside AGWM's jurisdiction, the offender will be denied further service opportunities. Reporting to authorities will occur as required.
- **Evaluation.** Confirmed cases of abusive or harmful behavior committed by a child will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, with due and appropriate consideration given for factors such as age, seriousness of the offense, acknowledgment of responsibility, and effective treatment, and may result in further administrative action.
- **Further Reporting and Legal Counsel.** If AGWM becomes aware that abuse or harm occurred by a former AGWM Worker and that this individual is serving with another organization and has access to children, AGWM shall after reviewing its legal obligations and if permitted by law inform that organization of the confirmed offense(s) and report to authorities as required.

A preferred response pathway is attached as [Appendix H](#) to this document. Notwithstanding this preferred Response Pathway, the Child Safety Lead or the Response Team may change the order and components of the Response Pathway if they, in the exercise of their discretion, believe that doing so is appropriate under the circumstances.

Historical Reports

AGWM is committed to taking seriously all concerns of actual or potential abuse or harm, whether past or present, to children seriously. AGWM shall respond to concerns of abuse or harm, no matter how old.

Individuals who choose to come forward can do so knowing that AGWM shall listen to whatever experience they choose to share, shall always take them seriously, and shall respond in the appropriate way to help ensure the safety of the whole community.

MEMBER CARE

AGWM shall provide support to affected individuals according to the resources available to AGWM. If the child and the respondent are both AGWM-related, then separate care providers would be assigned to the different parties. Those providing care and support shall not be involved in the response/assessment process.

Unless termination of an AGWM Worker is otherwise required hereunder, member care services will be recommended on a case-by-case basis and may include, but are not limited to, medical care, counseling, mentoring, personal leave, and/or additional information and resources. Care will be ongoing until an assessment determines that care is no longer needed; the length of time will vary.

The Response Team would be referred to a licensed professional counselor (LPC) or the like for debriefing. Outside referrals maintain confidentiality within the organization.

APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS

Recognizing that definitions of abuse vary by country, AGWM adopts the following definitions, which are based on internationally accepted definitions.

An **adult** is a person who is 18 years of age or older.

A **child** is a person who is younger than 18 years of age. In terms of responding to a concern about a child, the term “child” will be used instead of “victim.”

A **respondent** is a person who has been reported to have caused harm to a child.

Harm is any act of omission or commission, whether intentional or unintentional, that may lead to injury of a child, whether physical, emotional, sexual, or spiritual. At times, using the term “harm” instead of “abuse” helps focus on the effects on the child rather than the actions or inactions of the person(s) who caused harm.

Child abuse is any action by another person or persons, adult or child, that causes significant harm to a child. It may include physical, emotional, sexual, and/or spiritual abuse. Furthermore, it is the maltreatment of a child by another person or persons in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust, and/or power that endangers, harms, or impairs the physical, emotional, sexual, or spiritual health or welfare of a child. Child abuse can occur with or without the consent of the child and can occur in a one-on-one encounter or a group setting.

Physical abuse is an act of omission or commission that results in physical injury and may be the result of a single incident or repeated incidents. Such acts may include, but are not limited to, slapping, punching, beating, kicking, biting, shaking, burning, holding underwater, pulling hair, or extreme and unnecessary restraint. It also includes acts by which someone knowingly does not prevent others from committing such acts of harm to a child.

Emotional abuse is persistent emotional mistreatment that damages the confidence and self-esteem of the child, resulting in significant emotional disturbance or trauma. This may include, but is not limited to, a pattern of insulting, threatening, isolating, excluding, degrading, humiliating, or spiritually manipulating behavior. Emotional abuse can be acts of omission or commission and may be communicated verbally or nonverbally, in writing, or online.

Sexual abuse is when a child is used for the sexual gratification of an adult or child. It can include, but is not limited to, indecent exposure, obscene communication, sending sexually explicit messages, showing or providing pornography, voyeurism, solicitation to sexual activity, touching private body parts (not limited to and may include female breasts and male or female genitals above or underneath clothing), fondling, statutory rape, rape, oral sex, anal sex, masturbation, or incest. This also includes producing, viewing, sending, sharing, or owning child pornography.

Spiritual abuse is a form of emotional and psychological abuse characterized by a systematic pattern of coercive and controlling behavior in a religious context.

Child-to-child sexual play/activity typically falls into three primary categories: age-appropriate sexual curiosity, problematic sexual behavior, and inappropriate sexual behavior. AGWM shall respond to problematic and inappropriate sexual behavior.

Age-appropriate sexual curiosity is behavior that occurs between children who have ongoing mutually enjoyable play and/or school friendship; occurs between children of similar size, age, and social and emotional development; is lighthearted and spontaneous; and is considered age-appropriate sexual curiosity. There should be less than a three-year age gap.

Problematic sexual behavior occurs frequently; involves widely different ages or abilities (more than a three-year age gap); is initiated with strong, upset feelings such as anger or anxiety; causes harm or potential harm (physically or emotionally); does not respond to typical discipline strategies; involves coercion, force, or aggression; and falls outside of what is considered developmentally appropriate.

Inappropriate sexual behavior is activities between children of a sexual nature that do not meet the definition of sexual abuse but are deemed undesirable due to their impact on each child’s health or welfare. This includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate touching, oral genital contact, and intercourse; any activity that uses force, coercion, or aggression; activities that cause physical harm or damage; voyeuristic behavior; sexual harassment between peers;

and nonconsensual, exploitive, or concerning sexual behavior between any children or any sexual activity between children.

Grooming is the subtle pattern of behavior, over a period of time, consistent with a person enticing a child into an emotionally dependent or sexual relationship. This pattern of “befriending” increases trust between the child and the person doing the grooming. It can lead to greater access, control over, and privacy with a child. Grooming can occur face-to-face, via messaging, or online. Possible examples of grooming behavior include, but are not limited to, fostering an exclusive or secretive relationship, isolating the child from other relationships, strategizing on how to maintain the secrecy of the relationship, and showing special attention to a child.

Neglect is actual or likely harm to a child as a result of a child’s parents or caregivers’ failure to provide a child with the basic elements needed for his or her proper growth and development, such as food, clothing, shelter, education, medical/dental care, adequate supervision, and having feelings validated and appropriately responded to. Accepted standards of care will be based on the passport country of the child is question.

Types of Neglect:

Emotional Neglect: A failure to provide the basic elements needed for a child’s emotional development. This can include a range of behaviors such as, but not limited to, withholding affection, exposure to domestic violence, failing to protect a child from intimidation, or threatening behavior.

Psychological Neglect: the family to provide for the psychological needs of a child, such as the need for a recommended psychological assessment, or treatment due to the development of a mental health concern.

Medical neglect: failure to provide for the medical needs of a child. This may include not obtaining required inoculations for the country in which the family is/will be living, medical assessments and/or medical treatment.

Physical Neglect: failure to provide for the basic physical needs of a child such as housing, food, and adequate supervision. Adequate supervision is determined by the child’s developmental needs and the risk associated with the child’s environment.

Social Neglect: failure to provide the child with opportunities to develop appropriate social skills.

Educational Neglect: failure to provide for the basic educational needs of a child or failure to provide for a child’s special educational needs.

A **child safety response team** is a group of individuals who respond to concerns of abuse or harm involving a child.

APPENDIX B: CHILD SAFETY LEAD JOB DESCRIPTION

Job Description

The Child Safety Lead maintains AGWM's focus on its duty of care to protect children from harm. The AGWM Child Safety Lead is tasked with coordinating the AGWM Child Safety Program and is the primary point of contact for all child safety training efforts, concerns that are raised, and/or child safety needs. The Child Safety Lead maintains confidentiality, accuracy, and security of all child safety information and implements a relationship-focused approach to communication and support. Additionally, the Child Safety Lead advocates for child safety best practices and is current on child safety trends.

Responsibilities

- Demonstrate health in both personal and ministry life.
- Advocate for AGWM child safeguarding policies and procedures that follow best practices.
- Plan and update relevant safeguarding training for AGWM personnel and families.
- Maintain a clear reporting mechanism for raising concerns.
- Coordinate the Response Team on any concerns of harm to a child.
- Report to the AGWM Executive Director and World Missions Board any AGWM missionary or child who has been confirmed to have abused or harmed a child so that they can apply the [AGWM Standards of Conduct for Missionary Workers](#).

Requirements

- Gift of spiritual leadership
- Trained in child safety and child safety best practices
- Service as a missionary with AGWM
- Ability to build and maintain trust
- Ability to communicate professionally
- Relational intelligence
- Conflict-resolution skills
- Administrative oversight skills

Reporting

The Child Safety Lead reports to the AGWM Member Care director, AGWM Executive Director, and AGWM Executive Committee.

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interviewers should share that AGWM takes child safety seriously and ask the following questions. Couples should be interviewed separately.

Sample Interview Questions

- Is there any reason you should not work or be around a child?
- *(For married candidates)* Is there any reason your spouse should not work or be around a child?
- Have you ever or are you currently causing harm to a child?
- *(For married candidates)* Has your spouse ever or currently causing harm to a child? (
- Have you ever or are you currently permitting or giving access to others to harm a child?
- *(For married candidates)* Has your spouse or family member caused harm to a child?
- How do you define an appropriate adult-child relationship? Give examples of what you would consider appropriate and inappropriate behavior between an adult and a child.
- We often work in close-knit teams/communities with blurred boundaries. What safeguarding concerns may exist in contexts such as this, and what would you do as a member to minimize the risk of harm?
- As a team member, what safeguarding risks may present themselves if a member is extremely stressed and/or burnt out?
- What makes a ministry a safe and caring place? How have you contributed to this in the past?
- What challenges do you perceive in the country you are moving to in terms of being part of protecting children?
- What would you do if you were concerned about a colleague's behavior toward children?
- What would you do if you were concerned about a child's behavior?

Additional Questions for Individuals Working Directly with Children

- Why do you want to work with children?
- How do you think your childhood may have influenced your career choice? What was the impact or result of those childhood experiences?
- When working with children, what do you consider to be your biggest strengths and areas to improve?
- How would you motivate children and young people?
- What has working with children taught you about yourself?
- Can you give an example of how children have benefited from contact with you?

APPENDIX D: AGWM SAFEGUARDS FOR CHILD SAFETY

All personnel have agreed to and signed a copy of the AGWM Child Safety Code of Conduct ([Appendix E](#)). In addition, we recommend the following safeguards in all interactions with children, especially among those whose responsibilities bring them in close or regular contact with children. These are intended to accomplish the following:

- Provide a safe environment for children.
- Ensure adults model safe and healthy interactions with children.
- Protect those interacting with children from invalid reports of inappropriate behavior.

Primary Safeguards

In any setting where children are present, at least one of these primary safeguards should be implemented and as many as possible should be followed. These safeguards are applicable for in-person and online interactions.

Visibility. *Is it possible for others to see me?* When interacting with children, adults position themselves in a place visible to other unrelated adults. This can be accomplished by such things as planning activities in areas where other adults are present, staying within view of the window in the door, or keeping doors open.

Accountability. *Do others know where I am or what I am doing? Am I promoting a culture of transparency and accountability?* One-on-one interactions with a child, physically or online, should only occur in situations where other adults are in the vicinity or when a parent has given permission.

Power balance. *Do children feel safe in my presence?* Adults, by virtue of their age, size, strength, and authority, exert control over children. Balancing control enhances child safety. This can be accomplished by avoiding one-on-one situations as much as possible.

Additional Safeguards

Each of the following safeguards further improves safe interactions.

Discipline should be used to teach and correct rather than punish. The following are examples (but do not constitute an exhaustive list) of actions that cause harm to a child and are to be avoided:

- Derogatory name-calling, ridicule, humiliation, shaming, publicly singling out a child for negative treatment or exclusion, yelling at a child, or similar forms of hostile treatment.
- Hitting, slapping, or any behavior that assaults a child.
- Pushing or holding a child against his/her will outside the goal of protecting the child from danger, providing medical care, or keeping the child from harming him/herself or others.
- Favoring certain children to the exclusion of others or excluding children in a derogatory or embarrassing way in the presence of others.

Touch should be in response to the needs of the child and not the needs of the adult. Side hugs or loose hugs are generally appropriate. The following actions are examples (but do not constitute an exhaustive list) of actions that cause harm to a child and are to be avoided:

- Touching a child inappropriately.
- Any form of affection that is resisted or unwanted by the child.
- Any behavior that could be interpreted as sexual, including flirtatious or seductive looks.
- Assisting the child with anything of a personal nature that children can do themselves, including dressing and bathing.

Communications should be wholesome and above reproach. The following communications, whether verbal, written, online, video, or photographic, are examples (but do not constitute an exhaustive list) of actions that cause harm to a child and are to be avoided:

- Shaming, belittling, humiliating, name-calling, or using harsh language that may frighten, threaten, or humiliate a child.
- Language to infer favoritism or any secret communication with a child.
- Discriminatory remarks about the child, the child's family, and/or the child's place of origin.
- Inappropriate comments that relate to physique or body development.
- Sexually suggestive, manipulative, or exploitative comments, photos, images, or videos.

Acknowledgment

Before commencing service with AGWM and every clearance/term renewal thereafter, all AGWM personnel must read and agree to abide by the AGWM Safeguards for Child Safety and Code of Conduct for Child Safety as well as sign the following acknowledgment:

- I have completed AGWM's safeguarding training according to the recommendations in the AGWM Child Safety Policy.
- I have read, understood, and shall abide by the AGWM Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct.
- I have not engaged in abusive actions toward a child, whether sexual, physical, emotional, exploitative, or neglectful.
- I have never had a safeguarding concern, complaint, or allegation made about me. OR
If I ever had a safeguarding concern raised, regardless of the outcome, I have notified the AGWM Child Safety Lead.
- I have never been the subject of an investigation by statutory authorities.
- I understand AGWM takes safeguarding concerns seriously, that harm toward a child in any form will not be tolerated; and that AGWM shall cooperate with statutory authorities in the investigation of any report of abuse.
- I undertake to report any suspicion, concern, or disclosure of any child being at risk of harm within 24 hours to the Child Abuse Helpline at +1 417-212-5976.
- I shall fully and truthfully cooperate in any response if concerns are raised.

I have read this acknowledgment form and voluntarily signed it.

Full Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX E: CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

In a fallen, sinful world, harm, abuse, and injury can and do unfortunately occur. God commands His people to protect the vulnerable—those who cannot protect themselves. Vulnerable people, such as children, are at greater risk of being harmed and therefore require intentional care and support to provide for their safety and well-being. AGWM recognizes that child abuse can have a serious and lifelong impact on children and their families. It takes everyone to keep children safe. AGWM is committed to the safety of children and families and has therefore created this Child Safety Code of Conduct to involve every AGWM Worker in the task.

All AGWM personnel—defined as paid and unpaid staff and global workers, including volunteers, interns, or trainees of AGWM, or other similarly-situated persons — are responsible for the safety and well-being of children who engage with AGWM.

All AGWM personnel are expected to act in accordance with this Child Safety Code of Conduct in their physical and online interactions with individuals under the age of 18 years.

COMMITMENT TO KEEP CHILDREN SAFE AND LOWER THE RISK

- I understand that children are vulnerable and therefore require intentional care and attention to keep them safe.
- I understand that eliminating or reducing one-adult-to-one-child situations dramatically lowers the risk of sexual abuse of children. I shall avoid one-adult-to-one-child situations with children other than mine unless the child's parent grants consent.

COMMITMENT TO RESPECT AND VALUE CHILDREN

- I shall act in accordance with AGWM's child safety policies and procedures at all times.
- I shall behave respectfully and with kindness toward children and their families.
- I shall listen and respond to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they communicate (verbally or nonverbally) that they do not feel safe or well.
- I shall promote the safety and well-being of all children in AGWM.
- I shall consider and respect the diverse backgrounds and needs of children and their families.
- I shall demonstrate appropriate personal and professional boundaries.
- I shall comply with AGWM's protocols for communicating with children.

COMMITMENT TO AVOID ACTIVITY THAT BRINGS HARM TO CHILDREN

- I shall not engage in any unlawful activity with or concerning a child.
- I shall not engage in any activity that is likely to harm a child.
- I shall not discriminate against any child or his/her family members.
- I shall not be alone with a child (other than my own) unnecessarily.
- I shall not secretly arrange personal contact, including online contact, with any child.
- I shall not use inappropriate language in the presence of children or show or provide children access to inappropriate images or material.

COMMITMENT TO RAISE A CONCERN IF A CHILD IS, OR IS AT RISK OF, BEING UNSAFE

- I shall act to prioritize the best interests of children.
- I shall act promptly to ensure that children are safe.
- I shall promptly raise any concerns to AGWM's Child Safety Lead or another AGWM leader.
- I shall follow AGWM's policies and procedures for receiving and responding to complaints and concerns.

I agree to abide by this Child Safety Code of Conduct during my service with AGWM.

I understand that breaches of this Child Safety Code of Conduct may lead to enforcement action, up to and including, termination of my service with AGWM.

Full Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____



APPENDIX F: CHILDCARE GUIDELINES FOR AGWM TEAM MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Anyone providing childcare at an AGWM function must have undergone child safety training from AGWM and signed that they agree with the AGWM Child Safety Code of Conduct ([Appendix E](#)). The Code of Conduct provides AGWM's expectations for all childcare providers without exception. Leadership (area director, Tier 4 leader, or team leader) must confirm this training has been completed.

Understanding the Risk

Team meetings and events can be a risky time for children. Historically, many harmful things that have happened to children occurred during team meetings or gatherings where children were left unsupervised while parents were in required meetings. Most concerns are related to harmful child-to-child sexual behavior. Bullying and verbal, emotional, and physical behaviors between children are common forms of abuse.

The following guidelines are ways to reduce the risk of harm and create safe places for children during events where childcare is provided:

1. Visibility

- **Increasing Supervision.** Good supervision reduces isolation and increases accountability in ways that make it hard for children or adults to act in harmful ways. Increasing supervision might be as easy as having assigned team members check in on a small group of similarly aged children at random times throughout the meeting.
- **Increasing Visibility.** Having children play where they can be seen and heard throughout the meeting is an additional option.
- **Teens vs. Adults.** Teenagers are not adults and should not babysit for team meetings without adult mentorship and accountability. Teen childcare workers need to have the same training in child safety as an adult worker.
- **Rule of Three.** When taking a child to the restroom, follow the Rule of Three by having either another child with you or another adult.
- **Changing Diapers.** Only female childcare providers may change diapers.

2. Accountability

- **Two Unrelated Adults.** This accountability rule is the standard best practice guideline for safe childcare. Two adults, who are not related to each other, work together and in sight of each other, providing supervision for a group of children. This can be difficult to achieve on small teams where there are few adults or where there are few children. For larger teams with more than five or six children, the Two Unrelated Adults rule should be the goal.
- **Recommended Adult-to-Child Ratio.** The following table contains recommended ratios of adults to children according to the children's ages.

Child's Age	0–2	2–3	4–5	6–9	10–12	13+
Adult-to-Child Ratio	1:3	1:4	1:5	1:6	1:8	1:10

3. Power Balance

When children play together in unsupervised groups, an imbalance of power created by age, size, power, language ability, and/or influence or control significantly increases the risk of harm to children. Separating children into age-appropriate groups and assigning them safe areas to play decreases the risk of harm.

For instance, babies and toddlers might be kept in the room with the parents, while early elementary-aged children are assigned a room and older elementary-aged children are assigned to a different area of the house. Pre-teens and teenagers might be grouped in another location. Older elementary-aged children, pre-teens, and teenagers might also be separated into gender groups.

4. Limited and Supervised Access to Digital Devices and the Internet

Limiting the use of phones, screens, and online gaming while children are playing together in supervised settings greatly reduces the risk of accidental or intentional exposure to pornography and harmful sexual behaviors. Harmful sexual behavior between children is often the result of pornography. Children naturally share what they see and reflect that behavior to others.

5. Environmental Risks

Assessing play areas for safety risks and ensuring all children know safety rules greatly reduces the risk of harm from environmental risks. Having fenced play areas or yards and keeping children indoors if there is no safely fenced area or adequate supervision for them to play during the meetings are effective ways to reduce the risk of harm.

Creative Ideas for Childcare During Team Meetings

- Take advantage of times when children are at school or attending clubs or events that already have adequate supervision and safeguarding.
- Hire a language teacher and helper to conduct language classes for the children.
- Hire art, swimming, and other kinds of teachers for fun enrichment activities.
- Have supervised homework time.
- Schedule video calls with grandparents, seating children in an area still visible to the adults. Grandparents could read books, tell stories, or play games with the kids.

When any childcare involves non-AGWM personnel, national workers, or volunteers, it is the leader's responsibility to ensure that the requirements of the AGWM Child Safety Code of Conduct are met. This may involve translation and training ahead of time.

Thinking through these recommended guidelines and making proactive plans to follow them drastically reduces the risk of harm to both children and childcare providers.

APPENDIX G: GUIDELINES FOR RAISING A CONCERN

Level of Concern		
Level 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal misuse of technology • Inappropriate language • Disrespect • Gossip/slander • Mocking/teasing • Disobedience 	Level 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensual sexual activity between peers* older than the age of 16 • Bullying between peers* • Discrimination • Violent behavior that is not defined as physically abusive • Possession or use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs • Possession or pattern of viewing pornography • Depression, eating disorder, self-harm, or suicidal expressions or indicators 	Level 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abusive, harmful action toward a child (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, or exploitation) whether adult-to-child, child-to-child, contact or non-contact • Inappropriate behavior/relationships between adults and children • Harassment—aggressive pressure and intimidation including sexual harassment • Threatening or bullying a younger/weaker child or a pattern of bullying behavior • Nonconsensual, exploitative, or concerning sexual activity to any child younger than 16 years old • Distribution of pornography and any engagement in child pornography • Abusive or inappropriate social media or online communication between students including nudes and sexting
Reporting and Resolving		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents of child • MK program lead 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents of child • MK program lead or area director 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child safety lead

*A peer relationship exists when there is no significant difference in responsibility, trust, power, age, development, awareness, and/or understanding between the individuals.

APPENDIX H: PREFERRED RESPONSE PATHWAY (SUBJECT TO VARIATION, AS NECESSARY)

