



## **RezYouth & RezKidz Child Abuse & Prevention Protection Guidance Revised June 2023**

### **Purpose and Roles**

Restoration Church provides a proactive Child and Youth Abuse Prevention Program. This program is a key component of our ministry and is designed to protect and nurture our children and youth.

1. **Purpose.** Our procedures are designed to reduce the risk of child abuse in order to provide a safe and secure environment for everyone. Restoration Church will determine suitability to supervise, oversee, assist with and/or exert control over the activities of children and youth. Application/Screening process will be completed before volunteers can serve.

2. **Roles.** The following roles are defined as follows:

a. **Pastor, Clergy, Ministry Director, or Leader:** Any of these including our RezYouth Director for grades 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> and RezKidz Director for nursery through 5<sup>th</sup> grade employed by Restoration Church. Also, our Ministry Leaders that are not employed such as our RezNursery Leader.

b. **Children/youth/minor:** Any person who has not reached their 18th birthday or the age of majority as defined by state law.

(Note: Though adults by law, high school students age 18 are also considered a part of our youth program).

c. **Adult:** Any person who has reached his/her 18th birthday or as defined by state law.

d. **Adult volunteer:** Any unpaid person engaged in or involved in activities and is entrusted with the care and supervision of minors, or a person who directly oversees, or exerts control or oversight over minors or adults. This is not limited to teachers, as helpers and chaperones for the leaders are included as volunteers.

e. **Youth volunteer:** Any RezYouth from grade 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> engaged or involved in activities and who is entrusted with assisting our Ministry Directors in the care of children from nursery through 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

### **Application & Screening**

3. **Adult volunteer request.** Adults wanting to serve are required to submit a request using the RezYouth & RezKidz Volunteer form under REZFORMS in the Church Website. A copy of this policy is available in PDF in same location as this application. It is recommended to contact a RezYouth or RezKidz Ministry Director as applicable before submission.

a. **Six-month rule:** All adult volunteers will be required to have been a regular attender for at least 6 months or a church member at Restoration Church.

b. **Confidentiality.** Information obtained through the screening, application, reference check, interview, and criminal background check will be kept in confidence, unless otherwise required by law.

c. **Background check:** Restoration Church will conduct a background check on adult volunteers who are entrusted with the care and supervision of minors.

(1) A background check invite will be sent from our Planning Center church database after references are checked from received application.

(2) An external background check from the applicant's place of employment will be accepted in lieu of using Planning Center invite only if applicant can provide a valid document to show completed background check with verified results. When completing the volunteer form, please indicate if such results can be provided.

4. **Youth volunteer request.** RezYouth in 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade can be volunteers to serve in RezKidz and RezNursery.

a. **Youth Acknowledgement to serve.** When approved by applicable Director/Leader. Reading the CAYPP policy and submitting a volunteer form is not required for our youth volunteers. Instead, such volunteers will be required to read and acknowledge the list of rules provided to them. Our Ministry Director and Nursery Leader will have a printed copy available to read and sign.

b. **When no longer RezYouth.** When a youth volunteer reaches the age of 18 and is no longer in high school, submission of an application and background check is required in order to continue serving.

## **Protection and Prevention**

5. **Supervision procedures.** Children and volunteers from nursery through 12<sup>th</sup> grade are properly checked in and all youth are accounted for during Sunday services and Wednesday night activities. Our Ministry Director/Leaders/Volunteers will only release children from nursery through 5<sup>th</sup> grade to a parent, guardian or authorized person which can include a high school sibling.

a. **Parent/guardian responsibility.** It is the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian to modify or rescind a release for anyone allowed/not allowed to pick up their children. Such information can be maintained in all households under Planning Center People Module and Check-Ins module.

b. **Volunteers for events.** Approved/qualified volunteers will be present at events involving minors. Supervision will increase in proportion to the risk of the activity.

c. **Parent/Guardian Permission.** Written parental permission will be obtained including a signed medical treatment form and emergency contacts, before transporting minors on church outings over 50 miles from Restoration Church and within 50 miles when deemed appropriate

d. **Restrooms.** When accompanying young children to the restroom (employed staff, leader, or volunteer) will wait outside the restroom then escort the child back to the activity. Whenever possible, the escort will be the same sex as the minor.

e. **Buddy System.** Whenever minors go on trips/outings away from Restoration Church property, the buddy system is required.

## Behavioral Guidelines

6. **RezYouth and RezKidz Director, RezNursery Leader and all volunteers.** Will use the following guidelines:
  - a. **Prohibited.** Providing alcoholic beverages, tobacco, drugs, contraband, or anything that is prohibited by law to minors.
  - b. **Chaperones.** Both male and female chaperones be present, to the extent possible for Restoration Church events/outings that are co-educational.
  - c. **Adult volunteers.** Whenever possible, at least one paid staff and one adult volunteer, or when staff is not present, at least two adult volunteers will be in the room when minors are present. Doors will be left fully open if one adult needs to leave the room temporarily and during arrival to the class or event until both adults are able to be present.
  - d. **Unacceptable.** Inappropriate touching, sexual, physical, verbal, or emotional abuse of a minor, If you observe any of these with anyone, please contact the pastor or the applicable Ministry Director as soon as possible
  - e. **Immediate action.** Reports of abuse of a minor will be acted on immediately by Restoration Church to intervene and to contact appropriate officials so that a thorough confidential investigation is completed with appropriate action taken as needed.

## Disqualification

7. **Disqualifying factors.** You will not be allowed to assist with RezKidz or RezYouth if:
  - a. **Applicable State law.** Any offense against minors as defined by state law (pending or convicted)
  - b. **Legal charges.** A misdemeanor or felony offense as defined by state law that is classified as sexual assault, indecency with a minor or adult, assault of a minor or adult, injury to a minor or adult, abandoning or endangering a minor, sexual performance with a minor or adult, possession or promoting child pornography, enticing a minor, bigamy, incest, drug related- offenses in the past eighteen months, or family violence.
  - c. **History.** A prior criminal history of an offense against minors.

## Acknowledgment

8. **Required reading.** These guidelines have been designed to guide and assist those working/serving with minors. Restoration Church reserves the right to make changes in the content or application of this program and to implement those changes with or without notice. This guidance will be read and acknowledged by ministry leaders and volunteers, including youth volunteers, prior to serving for the first time and as needed as a refresher for adults who serve in these ministries. This policy is also available for any parent/guardian,