

POLICY: ST. DEMETRIOS CHURCH: YOUTH PROTECTION PROGRAM

In the spirit of prevention and protection, it is the policy of St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, Williamsburg that the Parish Council maintain a youth protection program, and that all youth programs conducted at or sponsored by the church follow the Youth Protection Program procedures and guidelines as adopted by the Parish Council.

The Youth Protection Program serves not only to keep our children and youth safe, but also to protect the adults who serve them. The Parish Council realizes that healthy relationships among people are at the foundation of Christian ministry, and as such, are central to the life of the Church. Defining healthy and safe relationships through our Youth Protection Program is not meant, in any way, to undermine the strength and importance of personal interaction in our ministries. Rather, it is to assist in more clearly defining behaviors and practices that allow the church to more fully demonstrate its love and compassion for children and youth in sincere and genuine relationships.

The Parish Council shall designate a parish member in good standing to act as the Youth Protection Coordinator. The coordinator shall oversee the Youth Protection Program on behalf of the parish. This individual shall report to and be overseen by the President of the Parish Council.

It is the policy of St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church that participation in child and youth activities be limited by appropriate age groups. No child or youth, unaccompanied by a parent or guardian, shall participate in Adult/Mixed aged programs or events without a written acknowledgement by the youth's parent or guardian that they assume full responsibility for the youth's safety.

It is the policy of St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, Williamsburg that all adults including paid staff, volunteers, and the clergy that lead, assist, chaperone, or directly participate in child and youth programs sponsored by St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church must meet the following criteria:

- Agree to and pass a criminal background check every two years. Background checks from other organized youth organizations and school systems will be accepted if they are less than two years old.
- Provide contact information and pass formal reference checks. A reference check is required for any youth volunteer that has been an active member of the parish for less than 12 months. If at all possible the reference check should begin with the volunteer's priest from his prior parish.
- Personnel/volunteers working directly with the children and youth of our community must be approved by the Priest and the Youth Protection Program Coordinator.
- All individuals working with our children and youth shall be provided and agree to and sign the Code of Conduct.

CODE OF CONDUCT

- Personnel/volunteers shall strive to prevent abuse of children and youth involved in church programs including bullying by peers.
- Personnel/volunteers shall not physically, sexually or emotionally abuse a child or youth.
- Personnel/volunteers shall comply with the "Guidelines for Appropriate Affection" with children and youth contained in the procedures section of this policy.
- Personnel/volunteers acknowledge their obligation and responsibility to protect children and youth and shall report known or suspected abuse of children or youth to appropriate church leaders and state authorities in accordance with this policy and applicable law.
- Personnel/volunteers understand that the church will not tolerate abuse of children and youth and shall comply in spirit and in action with this position.

- Personnel/volunteers are prohibited from using physical punishment in any way for behavior management of children and youth. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, demanding push-ups, making a child or youth stand for long periods of time, or any other physical force. Physical force may only be used to stop a behavior that may cause immediate harm to the individual or to a child, youth or others.
- Personnel/volunteers will respond to children and youth with respect, consideration and equal treatment, regardless of sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, culture or socioeconomic status.
- Personnel/volunteers are prohibited from using inappropriate language, degrading punishment, or mechanical restraint such as rope or tape for behavior management.
- Personnel/volunteers are prohibited from the use, possession, distribution, or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or the misuse of legal drugs while participating in or assisting with child/youth programs or activities.
- Personnel/volunteers will portray a positive role model for children and youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, patience, and maturity. They will avoid even the appearance of favoritism. Personnel/volunteers shall report violations of this policy in accordance with the procedures outlined herein and applicable law.

It is the policy of St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, Williamsburg, that any suspicion or knowledge of any types of abuse being committed must be properly reported.

TYPES OF ABUSE

- Physical abuse is non-accidental injury, which is intentionally inflicted upon a child or youth.
- Sexual abuse perpetrated by an adult is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a child or youth and an adult. This includes any activity, which is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of the adult, child or youth.
- Sexual abuse perpetrated by another child or youth is any contact or activity of a sexual nature that occurs between a child or youth and another child or youth when there is no consent, when consent is not possible, or when one child or youth is in a position of authority over the other child or youth. This includes any activity that is meant to arouse or gratify the sexual desires of any of the children or youth.
- Emotional abuse is mental or emotional injury to a child or youth that results in an observable and material impairment in the child or youth's growth, development or psychological functioning including bullying by their peers.
- Economic exploitation is the deliberate misplacement, exploitation, or wrongful temporary or permanent use of a child or youth's belongings or money.

DEFINITIONS

Children: A child is defined as anyone under the age of 12 years old.

Youth: A youth is defined as anyone who is at least 12 years old, but not yet 18 years old. A youth may also be an individual who is 18 years old, but still in high school.

Adult: Anyone 18 years of age or older

Guidelines for Appropriate Affection

Personnel/volunteers should not form exclusive personal relationships with a child or youth.

Personnel/volunteers may not use the Internet or any online social networking site to inappropriately contact children and youth.

Examples of Appropriate affection:

- Brief hugs.
- Pats on the shoulder or back.
- Handshakes.
- “High-fives” and hand slapping
- Verbal Praise.
- Touching hands, shoulders and arms of children or youth.
- Arms around shoulders.
- Holding hands while walking with small children.
- Sitting beside small children.
- Kneeling or bending down for hugs with small children.
- Holding hands during prayer.

Guidelines for Children and Youth Protection

Every program for children and youth shall have established ratios for adults and children. Compliance with the established ratio is required at all times; including activities that may take place off the premises. An adult should supervise child and youth participants at all times.

- **Personnel/volunteers to child/youth ratios:**
 - Overnight or off-premise activities:**
Ages 7-8, 1:6; Ages 9-14, 1:8; Ages 15-18, 1:10
 - Activities at the parish:**
Ages 7-8, 1:8; Ages 9-14, 1:10; Ages 15-18, 1:12
- Personnel/volunteers are prohibited from being alone with a single child or youth. All youth activities shall be open for parental observation. (This shall not apply to the Sacrament of Confession with a priest, provided that all Confessions must take place in a visible location.)
- Volunteers under the age of 18, must be directly supervised by personnel/volunteers over the age of 21 at all times.
- It is recommended that at least two personnel/volunteers should be present during child/youth activities at all times.
- When transporting children/youth the adult driver must be over 21 years of age. The adult may be the only adult in the vehicle as long as at least two other people are in the vehicle. Youth drivers should be discouraged from driving to child/youth events. If youth drivers are driving to activities, they may not drive non-sibling children/youth to any activity.
- Parents or guardians must complete written permission forms before volunteers/staff transport children and youth for any sponsored activities or for any purpose.
- One-to-one counseling with children or youth will be done in an open public place or other place where private conversations are possible but occur in full view of others.
- Overnight or Sleep overs
 - Personnel/volunteers are prohibited from sleeping in the same beds or sleeping bags with children or youth (other than a parent with his/her own child).
 - It is acceptable to have multiple adults sleep with all the children or youth participating in one open space such as church classrooms or reception hall areas during lock-ins.
 - Overnight hotel accommodations, must provide for one bed per participant (unless children are siblings)
 - No adult may sleep alone with a child/youth (other than a parent with his/her own child)

PROCEDURES

Reporting of Suspected Abuse

Concerns about child abuse or neglect must be reported to the Presiding Priest, in his absence, it must be reported to the Youth Protection Coordinator. It is the responsibility of the Presiding Priest or in his absence the Youth Protection Coordinator to report suspected abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities.

- Be prepared to discuss your concerns and observations in detail, so the Presiding Priest can make an informed decision and have the information necessary to make a report.
- Suspected abuse by non-caretakers must be reported to the local police department
- Suspected Caretaker abuse or neglect must be reported to Child Protective Services (CPS)
 - **Virginia Child Protective Services Abuse Hotline number:** (800) 552-7096
 - Virginia Guide for Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect:
https://www.dss.virginia.gov/files/division/dfs/cps/intro_page/publications/general/B032-02-0280-00-eng.pdf
- CPS will request the following information:
 1. Name, address, and telephone number of the child and parents or other person(s) responsible for the child's care;
 2. Child's birth date or age, sex, and race;
 3. Names and ages of other persons who live with the child and their relationship to the child; Whether or not there is a family member who can protect the child;
 4. Name, address, and telephone number of the suspected abuser and his/her relationship to the child;
 5. Nature and extent of the abuse/neglect, including any knowledge of prior maltreatment of the child or siblings;
 6. Any special language needs of the family;
 7. Any child or adult developmental issues;
 8. Whether the child has a disability and the ways in which the disability affects the child's functioning and care;
 9. Any other pertinent information; and
 10. Your name, address, and phone number

How Should I Respond To A Child Who Reports Being Abused Or Neglected?

When it is necessary to talk with a child in response to a disclosure of maltreatment or to clarify suspicions, it is important to remember to handle the discussion with sensitivity. Your response has the power to calm or upset the child.

Do:

Find a private place to talk without interruptions.

Put the child at ease by sitting near him/her, not behind a desk.

Ask permission before touching the child. Touch may be associated with physical or emotional pain in children who have been physically or sexually abused.

Reassure the child that he/she is not in trouble.

Keep your own feelings under control.

Use open-ended questions such as: "Can you tell me what happened?" or "I'm wondering who taught you how to do that."

Use the child's vocabulary.

Let the child know what you will do: "We need to tell Father Gianulis. He knows how to help children and families."

Support the child: "I'm sorry that happened to you"

Do Not:

Press for details beyond what the child is willing to share. You do not need to prove abuse or neglect.

Ask "why questions". These questions require children to explain actions that they may not understand. Young children have not developed the abstract thinking ability necessary to answer these questions.

Promise not to tell anyone about the child's disclosure of possible abuse or neglect.

Ask leading or suggestive questions.

Make angry or critical comments about the alleged perpetrator. He/she is often known, loved, or liked by the child.

Disclose information indiscriminately, keeping in mind the child's right to privacy.

Make the child feel different or singled out.

Youth Registration and Documentation

- St. Demetrios shall maintain a central registration program for all youth activities
- Forms shall be reviewed annually by the parent/guardian and updated as needed.
- To participate in child/youth activities sponsored by St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, Williamsburg, the child/youth must have an active registration/liability release form on file at the church office
- Copies of the form shall be provided to applicable teachers and youth leaders
- Teachers and Youth Leaders shall take release forms with them when youth activities are conducted away from church premises

Appendix:

Criminal Background Check Form:

The form will be inserted, once the vendor is selected

Reference Check Form:

Name of Applicant: _____ **Date:** _____

Name of Reference: _____

Address: _____

Phone Numbers: _____

Hello, my name is (your first and last name) with St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, Williamsburg, VA. (The applicant’s first and last name) has applied for a volunteer {staff} position with us and said you would be a good person for us to talk with about him/her. Do you have a few minutes to talk with me now? I would like to start by letting you know that (the applicant’s name) has applied for a position working with children, and so it is extremely important for us to determine that he/she is suitable for this type of position. I appreciate your help with this.

1. How long have you known (the applicant’s name)? _____

2. What is your relationship to the applicant? _____

3. How would you rate the applicant’s ability to work with and relate to children or youth?

_____Above satisfactory _____Satisfactory _____Below satisfactory

Can you give me an example of how the applicant relates to children or youth?

4. We are looking for someone who can stay calm and control frustration even under very frustrating conditions with children. How would you rate the applicant’s ability to be patient and stay calm?

_____Above satisfactory _____Satisfactory _____Below satisfactory

5. Have you ever known the applicant to use harsh or abusive discipline with a child or youth?

6. If you have children, would you be comfortable placing one of your own children in the care of the applicant? Why or why not?

7. How would you rate the applicant’s ability to relate to parents?

_____Above satisfactory _____Satisfactory _____Below satisfactory

Can you give me an example of how the applicant relates to parents?

8. We need a person who can be supportive and understanding to children. How would you rate the applicant's ability to be genuinely supportive and understanding to a child in need?

_____Above satisfactory _____Satisfactory _____Below satisfactory

9. Think of a time when the applicant was able to show genuine concern for child or young person who needed comfort. Tell me about that time.

10. How would you rate the applicant's ability to maintain appropriate boundaries with children or youth?

_____Above satisfactory _____Satisfactory _____Below satisfactory

11. Do you have any additional comments or questions?

Thank you very much for your time.

Interviewer's Signature

Date

**ST. DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
WILLIAMSBURG, VA**

YOUTH REGISTRATION & LIABILITY RELEASE FORM 2016-2017

FAMILY CONTACT INFORMATION:		
MOTHER'S NAME:	FATHER'S NAME:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP
HOME PHONE #:	CELL PHONE #:	
PARENT'S EMAIL:		

******PLEASE LIST OTHER CHILDREN IN SAME FAMILY ON THE BACK OF THIS FORM******

<i>Please enroll my child in the following youth programs sponsored by St. Demetrios. ____ Church School ____ Greek Dance ____ Greek Language ____ Age appropriate youth group Some activities may have fees, which I agree to pay on behalf of my child.</i>		
NAME OF STUDENT:		
DATE OF BIRTH:	NAME IN GREEK:	
PATRON SAINT:	NAMEDAY/FEAST DAY:	
GRADE IN SCHOOL:	AGE:	STUDENT EMAIL: (IF APPLICABLE)
ALLERGIES/OTHER NOTES TO THE TEACHER:		

******PLEASE LIST OTHER CHILDREN IN SAME FAMILY ON THE BACK OF THIS FORM******

Parent Participation: <i>Some activities may have fees, which I agree to pay on behalf of my child. I understand that some activities may be conducted away from St. Demetrios, I give my permission for my child to be transported to these events by qualified adult drivers. As a parent/guardian, I understand that I have a sacred responsibility to encourage my son or daughter's religious & cultural education in partnership with the clergy, teachers, and youth leaders. I therefore promise to make a conscientious effort to see to it that my child attends youth activities regularly and to work to reinforce their lessons at home and to participate as needed in the class work, projects, programs, and the liturgical life of our church community.</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> I give permission for my child to be photographed for Church publications & Church websites. <input type="checkbox"/> I DO NOT give permission for my child to be photographed for Church publications & Church websites.	
Parent/Guardian Name(s):	
Signature:	Date:

ST. DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH WILLIAMSBURG, VA (continued)

NAME OF STUDENT:	
<i>Please enroll my child in the following youth programs sponsored by St. Demetrios</i> _____ Church School _____ Greek Dance _____ Greek Language _____ Age appropriate youth group	
DATE OF BIRTH:	GREEK NAME:
PATRON SAINT:	NAMEDAY/FEAST DAY:
GRADE IN SCHOOL: AGE:	STUDENT EMAIL: (IF APPLICABLE)
ALLERGIES/OTHER NOTES TO THE TEACHER:	
NAME OF STUDENT:	
<i>Please enroll my child in the following youth programs sponsored by St. Demetrios.</i> _____ Church School _____ Greek Dance _____ Greek Language _____ Age appropriate youth group	
DATE OF BIRTH:	GREEK NAME:
PATRON SAINT:	NAMEDAY/FEAST DAY:
GRADE IN SCHOOL: AGE:	STUDENT EMAI: (IF APPLICABLE)
ALLERGIES/OTHER NOTES TO THE TEACHER:	
NAME OF STUDENT:	
<i>Please enroll my child in the following youth programs sponsored by St. Demetrios.</i> _____ Church School _____ Greek Dance _____ Greek Language _____ Age appropriate youth group	
DATE OF BIRTH:	GREEK NAME:
PATRON SAINT	NAMEDAY/FEAST DAY:
GRADE IN SCHOOL: AGE:	STUDENT EMAI: (IF APPLICABLE)
ALLERGIES/OTHER NOTES TO THE TEACHER:	
NAME OF STUDENT:	
<i>Please enroll my child in the following youth programs sponsored by St. Demetrios</i> _____ Church School _____ Greek Dance _____ Greek Language _____ Age appropriate youth group	
DATE OF BIRTH:	GREEK NAME:
PATRON SAINT:	NAMEDAY/FEAST DAY:
GRADE IN SCHOOL: AGE:	STUDENT EMAI: (IF APPLICABLE)
ALLERGIES/OTHER NOTES TO THE TEACHER:	

ST. DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH, WILLIAMSBURG, VA

MEDICAL INFORMATION AND EMERGENCY RELEASE FORM		
FAMILY CONTACT INFORMATION:		
MOTHER'S NAME:	FATHER'S NAME:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP
IN CASE OF EMERGENCY WHAT CONTACT NUMBER SHOULD WE USE?		
HOSPITAL OF CHOICE:	Insurance Company/Policy Number	
CHILD'S NAME:	PHYSICIAN	PHYSICIAN PHONE NUMBER:
List Medications & Allergies for this child		
CHILD'S NAME:	PHYSICIAN	PHYSICIAN PHONE NUMBER:
List Medications & Allergies for this child		
CHILD'S NAME:	PHYSICIAN	PHYSICIAN PHONE NUMBER:
List Medications & Allergies for this child		
CHILD'S NAME:	PHYSICIAN	PHYSICIAN PHONE NUMBER:
List Medications & Allergies for this child		
CHILD'S NAME:	PHYSICIAN	PHYSICIAN PHONE NUMBER:
List Medications & Allergies for this child		

Emergency contacts: List the names and phone numbers of two people to contact (other than a parent) if your child is ill or injured in the event that you cannot be contacted, these persons may have to make medical decisions.

First Contact Name:	Phone:
Second Contact Name:	Phone:

<p>Emergency Medical Treatment: <i>In the event that I am unable to be reached and my child needs EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT during any time he/she participates in Church Activities, you have my permission and I hereby designate you my agent to act in my child's best interest in obtaining transportation and medical care until I can be contacted. I hereby release you from any claim arising out of your and the doctor's actions relating to my child's illness/injury and I assume and agree to pay for any professional medical services and other fees/costs incurred.</i></p> <p>Accident release: <i>I release St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, Williamsburg, VA and its employees and volunteers of any responsibility in the event of an accident while my child(ren) is/are participating in a youth ministry activity. I furthermore verify that the information provided on the youth registration forms is current and accurate.</i></p>	
Parent/Guardian Signature:	Date:

Youth participation in Adult Program Parental Release Form
Parental Waiver, Release of Liability, Indemnification and Consent Form

I, the undersigned, as the parent or legal guardian of the child named below, do hereby give my full consent and approval for my child to participate as a member of the _____ **designated adult program.**

I understand that this group may have youth and adult participants. That the adult participants have not been screened as provided for in the St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, Williamsburg Youth Protection Policy and that the provisions and guidelines contained in the Youth Protection Policy do not apply to this activity.

I understand that there are certain risks of damages and injuries, including death, inherent in the practice and performance of Greek dances and other adult program activities, as well as in traveling to other related activities incidental to my child’s participation, and I am willing to assume these risks on behalf of my child. These risks include, but are not limited to, those hazards associated with weather conditions, travel, performance conditions, equipment and adult participants, who have not been screened and approved for working with children and youth by St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, Williamsburg.

I understand that my child’s participation in this activity may expose them to adult behaviors and activities that I may not deem appropriate for my youth.

Further, I agree that in consideration for the right to allow my youth to participate as a member of the identified adult program and in consideration for permission to practice, perform, participate at St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church and at sites arranged by the dance/YAL leade or identified adult program leader:

1. On behalf of my youth and myself, I do voluntarily elect to accept and solely assume all risks of injury and inappropriate contact with adult participants incurred or suffered by my youth (a) while practicing or performing as a member of the designated adult program, (b) while serving in a non-performing capacity as a group member or observer during practice, performance, activities by other groups or by others in my child’s group, and (c) while on or upon the premises of any performance or activity location.
2. In addition to giving my full consent for my child’s participation, I do hereby waive, release, discharge and agree not to sue the leaders of the designated adult program, YAL leaders, St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, Inc, the Presiding Priest, the Parish Council, any Metropolis and Archdioceses of the Greek Orthodox Church, America, the owner or operator of any performance venue, or any person or entity connected with the designated adult group or YAL activity, for any claim, damages, costs including attorneys fees, or cause of action which I or my youth have or may have in the future as a result of damages, injuries, including death, sustained or incurred by my youth from whatever cause including, but not limited to, the negligence, breach of contract or wrongful conduct of the parties hereby released.

I hereby certify that my youth is fully capable of participating in the designated adult activity, Young Adult Greek Dance Group and/or YAL activity. That my youth is healthy and has no physical or mental disabilities or infirmities that would restrict full participation in these activities, and has sufficient maturity to work with and have unsupervised contact with adult members of the group.

I further agree on behalf of myself and my youth listed below, that I shall hold harmless and fully indemnify the parties hereby released from any and all claims, damages, costs including attorney fees, and causes of action which may arise from any cause of action made by me or by, through or on behalf of my youth, even if the damages, injuries or death are caused in whole or in part by any of the persons or entities herby released.

I acknowledge (a) that I have read (or have had read to me) each and every one of the provisions in this waiver, release of liability and indemnification agreement, (b) that I understand each of the provisions in this agreement and (c) that I agree to abide by them.

Name of parent or legal guardian (printed)	Name of child (Printed)
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Signature of parent or legal guardian	Date:
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