



CHRISTIAN HOME EDUCATORS OF COLORADO

Child Protection Policy

Introduction

Christian Home Educators of Colorado (CHEC) establishes this policy in order to protect the Children placed under the care of CHEC, its Volunteers, and Staff. This document is a standard for all Child-centered programming held by CHEC. It provides accountability for all Volunteers and Staff as well as protecting those working with CHEC.

Scriptural Principles

The apostle Matthew records in his gospel the words of Christ and the importance of Children to Him and His Kingdom. In light of the passionate words used by Christ, it is imperative that we have adequate policies and procedures in place to help protect the Children placed under the care of CHEC.

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea."

- Matthew 18:1-6 ESV

Then children were brought to him that he might lay his hands on them and pray. The disciples rebuked the people, but Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven."

- Matthew 19:13-14 ESV

Overview

This policy is established to protect Children placed by their Parents or Guardians into the care of CHEC for child-centered programming. It is also intended to help guide and protect CHEC Staff and Volunteers working with these Children.

Colorado Code

The following sections of Colorado Code are applicable to Mandatory Reporters and may be relevant to this policy:

- CO Rev Stat 19-3-204 (2024)

Personnel

This section outlines various roles and definitions that are specific to this policy.

Definitions

Adult – An individual age 18 or older.

Teen – An individual between and including the ages of 13 to 17.

Child – An individual age 12 or younger who is attending the program with the consent of their Parent/Guardian.

Parent/Guardian – An individual who is responsible for the primary care of a Child.

Volunteer – An unpaid individual (either a Teen or Adult) engaged or involved in CHEC activities and who is entrusted with the care and supervision of Children.

Staff – An individual (either a Teen or Adult) engaged or involved in CHEC activities who directly oversees and/or exercises authority over Volunteers who are entrusted with the care and supervision of Children or who will be engaged or involved with activities with Children who have been placed under the care of CHEC.

Visitor – An individual (either a Child, Teen, or Adult) who is on location for a limited time period and is not a Volunteer, Staff, or Child attending the program

CHEC Board – The elected directors who manage the affairs of CHEC.

Mandatory Reporter – An individual who, in the scope of his or her professional practice or in his or her employment responsibilities, examines, attends, counsels, or treats a Child and reasonably believes a Child has suffered abuse and must, by Colorado Law, report said abuse in a timely manner.

Defined completely in Colorado Code Section 19-3-204

Preparation

The following procedures are to be followed before any direct contact occurs between the attendees and the Staff and Volunteers. Adequate time to complete all procedures should be accounted for when performing these procedures. Any and all information collected during this process shall be kept in confidence unless otherwise required by law.

Volunteer and Staff Background Checks

CHEC will collect the needed information and may perform a background check on Volunteers and Staff who are age 16 and older.

Alternately, CHEC may elect to have a third-party entity collect the needed information and perform the background checks. CHEC Staff will verify that background checks are completed.

Volunteer and Staff Training

On-site training will be conducted with all Volunteers and Staff. This will include the points outlined in the "Expected Conduct of Staff and Volunteers" section of this document. This training shall be completed as close to the beginning of the event as feasible and before any contact occurs between Volunteers and Children.

Child Registration

The following information will be collected from Parents/Guardians during the registration process for each Child registered:

- Child's age and name
- Name of Parent/Guardian
- Cell phone number of Parent/Guardian, to be used as immediate/emergency contact

If Parents/Guardians do not provide this information, their Children will not be allowed to participate in the program.

Procedure

This section provides guidelines for Volunteers and Staff for the duration of an event.

Child Check-In/Check-Out Process

The following procedures will be used for the check-in and check-out process:

- Registration Staff will verify the identity of the Child.
- During check-in, each Child will be provided a name tag that displays:
 - First and last name
- Only Parents/Guardians, or an individual that has been authorized by the Parents/Guardians, will be permitted to check-out Children using a method of verification that has been adequately communicated with and agreed upon by the Parents/Guardians.

Expected Conduct of Staff and Volunteers

The following will be clearly communicated to the Volunteers and Staff before an event where Children will be present:

- Volunteers and Staff are never to be one-on-one with Children.
- Children's restroom trips should be accompanied by two individuals (either Volunteers and or Staff) whenever possible. If only one individual is present, he or she should either wait outside the restroom or stand with the door ajar.
- Volunteers and Staff should be above reproach in their contact with children.

- Volunteers and Staff should be alert for any inappropriate language or physical activity with or between children.
- Any suspicious activity or language is to be immediately reported to CHEC Staff.

Visitor Protocol

Staff must escort all Visitors for the duration of their visits.

Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse

If CHEC receives an allegation of Child abuse, it will respond immediately, cautiously, and thoroughly. The protection of both the Child/Children and alleged individual(s) must be considered.

The following guidelines should be followed for investigating all allegations to ensure due process:

- Treat allegations of Child abuse seriously.
- Pray all involved will respond to the allegations with wisdom and grace.
- Attempt to secure the safety and protection of individuals who have allegedly been harmed.
- Do not make assumptions of guilt or innocence.
- Staff will immediately begin documenting all procedures observed in handling the allegations.

This will include a time and date for each point documented. An example incident report is attached as an appendix to this policy.

- Staff will immediately notify the CHEC Board of the allegations.
- Staff and the CHEC Board will immediately notify Parents/Guardians of the allegations.
- Mandatory Reporters are expected to comply with their reporting procedures as defined by Colorado Law.
- CHEC Board will notify appropriate outside agency (e.g., Department of Human Services or Local Law Enforcement) should it be deemed necessary to do so.

If any party should contact any other Staff about a pending allegation of Child abuse, he or she should refer to the CHEC Board. The CHEC Board will assign a spokesperson to handle any needed communications about the allegations. The privacy and confidentiality of all involved shall continue to be a primary concern.

Responsive Medical Care

In the event that medical care for a Child is required, the following steps shall be followed:

1. If the injury requires first aid, reasonable and prudent care will be attempted, and the Parent/Guardian will be contacted to allow him or her the opportunity to check on his or her Child.
2. If the injury requires treatment beyond first aid, the Parent/Guardian will be contacted while seeking external medical treatment.

3. If reasonable, but unsuccessful, efforts have been made to reach the Parent/Guardian and the emergency contact, and no response has been received in a timely manner, medical care will proceed with information previously gathered during the registration process.

Transportation of Children

Non-emergency transportation of Children under the care of CHEC shall be done only with prior approval of event Staff and all drivers must:

- Be at least 18 years old;
- Have a valid state driver's license, qualified for the vehicle being operated;
- Have no record of convictions for the past five years for drunken driving, driving under the influence, driving with a suspended or revoked license or reckless endangerment;
- Have proof of insurance; and
- Never be alone in a vehicle with a Child not their own.

Sample Incident Report

Child's Name: _____ Date of Incident: _____

Description of Incident:

Action Taken:

Adult Witness:

Parent/Guardian Notification: Yes _____ No _____

By: Personal _____ Telephone _____ Note _____

Meeting with the Parent/Guardian Completed? Yes _____ No _____

CHEC Board Notified? Yes _____ No _____

Notes from Meeting:
