

KEEPING KIDS SAFE

AT FRIENDS MEETING AT CAMBRIDGE (FMC)

OUR COMMITMENT

We cherish the children and youth in the Friends Meeting at Cambridge community and the trust that they show in us as caring adults.

We believe that children and youth need a whole community that cares about them and actively engages with them. As a result, we welcome and encourage loving engagement between the adults and young people of our Meeting.

At the same time, we are sadly aware that abuse of children and youth occurs in religious communities as well as in the wider society.

As a result, we are committed to policies and procedures that help us reduce the risk of harm happening here.

SAFETY PROCEDURES

We have implemented the following procedures to help create a safe environment for infants/toddlers, children, and youth during FMC programs.

- ❖ During First Day School, parents are welcome in classes at any time, and a designated Friend “floats” between them.
- ❖ At least two screened child/youth workers are present with each group of young people during FMC-sponsored programs.
- ❖ All child/youth workers are required to complete an extensive screening process including an application, reference checks, background check, interview, and review of FMC’s safety policy/procedures.
- ❖ Volunteer child/youth workers are expected to be active in our community for at least six months prior to volunteering with our First Day School or Youth Group.
- ❖ The First Day School curriculum includes age-appropriate lessons about sexuality, personal boundaries, and assertiveness.
- ❖ FMC offers community-wide information and training sessions related to creating a safe environment for young people.

FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

We are grateful that you entrust your infants, toddlers, children and youth with us. Those of us who work with your children take seriously the trust you place in us to help them grow in Spirit, and to grow safely.

While we recognize that it is not possible to guarantee safety, we hope you will join us in helping to reduce the risk of child abuse occurring within the Meeting.

It is all of our responsibility to keep our children safe. Here are some ways you can do your part to help:

- ❖ Please attend to your children when they are not under the care of FMC's child/youth workers, especially before Meeting and during coffee hour.
- ❖ Practice vigilance, and encourage your child to do so as well. There is no profile that can identify a child abuser. An abuser can be a respected member of a community, even someone who seems gifted in working with children.
- ❖ Attend FMC's programs related to child safety each year. We hope these provide helpful tools for having conversations about safety with your child. If you'd like to explore a specific topic, contact our First Day School Coordinator.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

We depend on all of the adults in our community to create a safe, caring environment that fosters our young people's spiritual growth. Here are some ways you can help create such a space:

- ❖ Wear your name tag
- ❖ Participate in organized multigenerational events so you can get to know our children and youth in a comfortable group setting
- ❖ Model consent and respect for boundaries in interactions with Friends of all ages. Ask permission for any physical touch with another Friend, whether a handshake, a hug, or a shoulder to lean on. Accept when people say no without question.
- ❖ If you see a young person who looks uncomfortable, alone, or in danger during coffee hour or on the Meeting grounds, please intervene with care or find someone else who can. The people listed on the back of this brochure are all available to help.
- ❖ Consider volunteering with our children and youth. It's a blessing to get to know and learn from them, and to celebrate their gifts!
- ❖ Attend FMC's child safety information and training sessions to learn more.

CONTACT US

FMC's Child Abuse Response Committee coordinates the response to any allegations of abuse of an FMC child or youth. If you have a concern to report, or any questions about our policies, please contact:

Resident Friend
resident@fmcquaker.org
617.876.1868

Presiding Clerk Representative
clerk@fmcquaker.org

Youth Ministries & Education Coordinator
youthministries@fmcquaker.org

RESOURCES

Department of Children and Families
Child-at-Risk Hotline – 1-800-792-5200

Call to report abuse or neglect.

Parents Helping Parents
Parental Stress Line – 1-800-632-8188

24/7 support for parents and caregivers with problems related to their children.



*This brochure was updated in 2016 in conjunction with updates to our Policy on Child Safety and related documents. We encourage you to review the complete policy and protocols on our website:
fmcquaker.org/community/children*