Introduction
Friends Meeting at Cambridge (FMC) has a strong commitment to ensuring that all members and attenders, including children and youth, are treated with respect and consistently experience FMC as a community that is safe and nurturing. Over the past two decades, FMC has provided educational opportunities, adopted policies, and developed protocols that affirm this commitment and seek to proactively reduce the risk of child abuse. We have a moral, and specific legal, responsibility to respond to any concerns related to the suspected abuse of a child. This 2015 Policy on Child Safety and the accompanying protocols on Reporting and Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse and Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse set forth FMC’s administrative, personnel, and program expectations for reducing the risk of and responding to any concerns of abuse.

This policy and the related protocols apply to all individuals whom FMC asks to care for the children and youth of Friends Meeting at Cambridge in any capacity, whether as First Day School teachers, assistant teachers, retreat leaders, or chaperones or drivers for activities on outings away from the Meeting, or in any other capacity. The purpose of this policy is to reduce the risk of an incident of child abuse occurring to our children and youth while at or under the care of the Meeting. (Note: “Child/Youth worker” or “worker” will refer to all paid and volunteer staff for FMC youth and children’s programs, including retreats and is abbreviated as “Child” or “Children” in this Policy and the accompanying Protocols. A Child is a person under the age of 18.)

Historical Expressions of Concern and Commitment

The 2006 Minute of Concern on Child Sexual Abuse

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

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1 FMC recognizes that no individual, group, or organization can absolutely “guarantee” the safety of children. The policy and protocols are set forth to affirm FMC’s commitment to reducing the risk of child abuse and promoting child safety.
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 the young people of our Meeting.

We are sadly aware that abuse of children and youth occurs in religious communities as well as in the wider society. We are therefore committed to reducing the risk of harm happening to our beloved children and youth while in our care and elsewhere. Our work as a Meeting includes raise awareness with the community including adults, youth and children, about child abuse ricks reduction and response.

Those of us who work with our children and youth at FMC have been given a trust: to help them grow in Spirit, and to grow safely. While attention is often focused on the content of our programs, we are also conscious that our way of being with children and youth is as important as the content of the program provided - children and youth follow our lead, and we teach mostly by example. In order to ensure the physical, emotional, and spiritual safety of participating children and youth, the working group proposes that FMC agree son some guidelines for the work.

It is our hope/goal to respond to anyone in our community accused of perpetrating abuse in a way that is loving AND holds the abuser accountable for his/her actions. The specifics of how we respond will vary depending on many factors, including the age of the accused person, but love and accountability will be our guiding principles.

While it is extremely important that episodes of abuse be detected and perpetrators identified, we believe a major focus of the Meeting’s work should involve implementation of safeguards that will dicer ease the risks of child abuse occurring with the Meeting, recognizing that it is not possible to guarantee the prevention of child abuse. We are aware of the potential of hurt and abuse of children and youth in many faith communities. The effects of sexual abuse of children of any gender in a path community are catastrophic and far-reaching. everyone is hurt - the abused person may carry scars and memories for an entire lifetime; the victim’s family and friends can be traumatized; the community in which the abuse occurs may be deeply wounded and divided; and the perpetrator may live in a world of isolation and secrecy. There is also the risk that the perpetrator may continue the abusive behavior. In instances where allegations prove false, there is still damage done to all involved. Reputations may be unjustly destroyed, and the seeds of distrust may love on i the community for years afterwards.

No segment of society, including the Religious Society of Friends, is immune to the dangers of sexual abuse. In fact, many in our own FMC community are still healing from an incident of abuse that occurred many years ago. If we are honest with ourselves as Friends, we acknowledge that the same potential for hurt exists in our community as in others, and that mindfully attending to issues of safety is the nest way to protect individuals and the community. Link other monthly meetings, FMC has constraints of time, resources and availability of caretakers. However, we believe that FMC’s attention to “reducing the risk” is a measure of our commitment to our children, our youth and our
religious community. We act in the faith that if these issues are important to us, a way will open.

**Child Abuse Response Committee**

It is the policy of FMC that a Child Abuse Response Committee will be maintained as a standing FMC committee. The Child Abuse Response Committee (CARC) has the responsibility to coordinate the FMC reporting and response to allegations of abuse of an FMC child or youth. The core Child Abuse Response Committee will consist of: a Presiding Clerk; Resident Friend; the Youth Ministries and Education Coordinator; Youth and Families Coordinator; Ministry and Council Representative; and, Trustees Representative. Other committees: including Personnel; First Day School; Care and Support; Youth Programs; and, Marriage and Family Life may be asked to appoint a liaison whom the core Child Abuse Response Committee can call in as appropriate.

The CARC’s responsibilities are to carry out the assigned activities set forth in the *Protocol for Reporting and Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse* and the *Protocol for Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse*.

**Reporting Requirements**

It is the policy of FMC to comply with the requirements for reporting child abuse as set forth in Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 119, Section 51A. This legislation requires that, “(a) A mandated reporter who, in his professional capacity, has reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering from physical or emotional injury resulting from: (i) abuse inflicted upon him which causes harm or substantial risk of harm to the child’s health or welfare, including sexual abuse; (ii) neglect, including malnutrition; (iii) physical dependence upon an addictive drug at birth; (iv) being a sexually exploited child; or (v) being a human trafficking victim as defined by Section 20M of Chapter 233, shall immediately communicate with the Department [of Children and Families] orally and, within 48 hours, shall fill a written report with the Department detailing the suspected abuse or neglect.”

**Qualifications and Screening Practices for Child/Youth Workers**

It is the policy of FMC that all individuals working with Children, regardless of the length of time as members/attenders are screened and that the staff qualifications and the screening process set forth in the Protocols for Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse be implemented consistently.

**Expectations and Training of Child/Youth Workers**

It is the policy of FMC that all Child workers will be familiar with the FMC policy related protocols for *Reporting and Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse* and *Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse*. Training on this policy and related protocols is offered regularly to Child workers. Training includes information on crisis and reporting procedures, mandated reporting laws, information on child abuse, and relevant resource materials. A Code of Conduct will be read and signed by all Child workers. (See attached Code of Conduct)
**Program Guidelines**

It is the policy of FMC to implement program guidelines that set forth comprehensive safeguards to promote the safety and well-being of children participating in FMC sponsored activities and events. (See *Protocol for Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse*) All individuals whom Friends Meeting at Cambridge asks to care for the children and youth of FMC in any capacity are expected to be familiar and comply with expectations established within this *Protocol*.

**Reporting and Responding to Suspected Child Abuse**

FMC has a moral and legal responsibility to report and respond to any allegations of suspected child abuse. Therefore, Child workers who suspect a child is suffering form abuse have the responsibility to ensure that it is reported to the appropriate person in the Meeting and to appropriate state authorities as well. It is the policy of FMC that all allegations of child abuse will be reported and addressed in accordance with the *Protocol for Reporting and Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse*. This Protocol sets forth the expectations and procedures that guide FMC’s response to any concerns that a child has been abused. The Protocol sets forth the responsibilities for the FMC Child Abuse Response Committee and all employees and volunteers working with children.

**Record Keeping**

It is the policy of FMC that confidential personnel files will be kept for all workers who have assigned responsibilities for children/youth. These personnel files will include information from the screening process and documentation of any allegations. All files related to personnel and any alleged incidents will be left permanently and confidential in a secure place with limited access. Each person’s folder is available to them for review, and that person can add material to their folder at any time. Record keeping for volunteers and paid staff will be administered by the Resident Friend, or their designee.

**Review and Revision of Policy and Protocols**

FMC will periodically review, and revise as necessary, this Policy on Child Safety, the Protocol on Reporting and Reducing to Allegations of Child Abuse, and the Protocol on Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse. The responsibility for ensuring implementation and evaluation of this policy and its associated protocols rests with the Resident Friend in collaboration with the Child Abuse Response Committee.

**FMC Protocol for Reporting and Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse**

This protocol supports implementation of the FMC Policy on Child Safety by establishing the structures and processes for reporting and responding to an allegation of child abuse. As noted in that policy, all FMC employees and volunteers working with children/youth of our FMC community, are responsible for complying with the guidance set forth in this protocol.
**FMC Child Abuse Response Committee**

The Child Abuse Response Committee (CARC) has the responsibility to coordinate the FMC response to allegations of abuse of an FMC child or youth. The core Child Abuse Response Committee will consist of:

- A Presiding Clerk
- Resident Friend
- The Youth Ministries and Education Coordinator
- Youth and Families Program Coordinator
- Ministry and Council Representative
- Trustees Committee Representative

Other committees will appoint a liaison whom the core Child Abuse Response Committee can call in as appropriate: Personnel; First Day School; Care and Support; Youth Programs; and Marriage and Family Life.

The CARC’s primary responsibilities include:

- be available (all or a select number) to meet with any potential reporter who is unsure whether there is enough information for a report to be made to the Department of Children and Families, or who otherwise feels the need of consultation and support; and,
- respond, as outlined in this protocol, to any allegations of child abuse.

Early in each fiscal year a Presiding Clerk will convene the core Child Abuse Response Committee for an organizational meeting. The group will choose its clerk for the year, make sure that all members have the information they need in order to conduct the committees work, designate a liaison to the media, and arrange how they will reach out to each other in an emergency. Information available to the CARC will include the FMC Policy on Child Safety, all relevant Protocols, and a copy of the reporting form.

On an annual basis, the CARC will ensure that there us an established relationship with a legal advisor and an abuse consultant. The Resident Friend will plan an educational/awareness event on child abuse for the FMC community, and ensure that the community as a whole is aware of the FMC Policy on Child Safety and the related protocols. The committee will provide reports to the Monthly Meeting as needed.

**Reporting Suspected Abuse**

FMC employees or volunteers who are working with children/youth for the meeting community are considered mandated reporters. All Mandated Reporters at FMC have a responsibility to know and comply with the Massachusetts mandated reporting laws and the Meeting’s policies and protocols related to child abuse.

FMC is responsible for reporting suspected abuse of a Child to the Department of Children and Families. If those working with children/youth suspect that abuse is
occurring anywhere in a child’s life (including the home), they are required to report suspected abuse. **To Report suspected abuse, Child workers will report their concerns to either the Resident Friend or a Presiding Clerk.** In these instances, the FMC Child Abuse Response Committee will ensure that the proper steps are taken to report and respond to the allegations.

The Child Abuse Response Committee is encouraged to keep in mind, and freely remind the Meeting of, the centrality of worship at a time when there may be pain, confusion, shock, fear, disbelief or anger.

While not “mandated reporters,” FMC encourages any individual in the community, with a concern that a child has been abused, to raise that concern to any member of the Child Abuse Response Committee.

**Responding to Allegation of Child Abuse**

*Within 24 hours of an allegation of child abuse coming to its attention*, the Child Abuse Response Committee will ensure that all members of the committee are informed that report has been received. The committee will convene a meeting, as necessary, to review the allegation and determine which committee member will take responsibility for each of the following tasks:

1. Massachusetts state law requires that a report of suspected child abuse be made by phone immediately, and then in writing, within 24 hours. A report should be filed with the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families by contacting DCF Cambridge Area Office (617-520-8700) or the Child Abuse Hotline (800-792-5200).

2. If the alleged perpetrator is a FMC employee or volunteer, take steps to immediately stop all contact between the alleged perpetrator and children/youth under the care of FMC for the period of the Department of Children and Families investigation.

3. Notify the parents/guardians of the Child that a report is being made and provide support as necessary and requested by the child and family.
   - If the alleged perpetrator is a parent/guardian then the CARC may choose to delay this step until the safety of the child is secured.
   - Ideally, this initial contact should be made before the report is filed with the DCF.
   - Additional support offered to the family or child after the report may include setting up a support committee, referral for services such as counseling or victims advocacy, transportation to physician or the hospital for evaluation, etc.

4. Notify the alleged perpetrator that the report has been made and that they should have no contact with the child/youth or family. Clarify with the alleged perpetrator any restrictions on his/her activity or responsibility within the FMC community to maintain child safety for the duration of the Department of Children and Families investigation.
5. Notify the following individuals of the report as appropriate:
   • The legal advisor (chosen for expertise in child abuse allegations)
   • The insurance agent
   • The Trustees Committee (for policy review)
   • Abuse consultant (an advisor, chosen for his/her psychological/social expertise on these matters)

6. Provide the community, as needed, with appropriate information when a concern has been raised.

7. Refer all media inquires to the member of the CARC selected as the media liaison.

8. If the Department of Children and Families decides not to conduct an investigation and the Child Abuse Response Committee still feels concern about the allegation, the committee will seek to discern the appropriate steps to ensure ongoing safety for all (child, family, and worker), pursuing appropriate follow-up with everyone involved.

If there are questions or concerns, please contact:

The Resident Friend (resident@fmcquaker.org)
The Presiding Clerk (clerk@fmcquaker.org)
The Youth Ministries and Education Coordinator (youthministries@fmcquaker.org)

Definitions Relevant to the Protocol for Reporting and Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse

Mandated Reporter
Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 119, defines a mandated reporter to include any “person who is…
   (iv) a priest, rabbi, clergy member, ordained or licensed minister, leader of any church or religious body, accredited Christian Science practitioner, person performing official duties on behalf of a church or religious body that are recognized as the duties of a priest, rabbi, clergy, ordained or licensed minister, leader of any church or religious body, accredited Christian Science practitioner, or a person employed by a church or religious body to supervise, educate, coach, train, or council a child on a regular basis.”

Penalties and Protections for Mandated Reporters

Chapter 119, sets forth penalties and protections for mandated reporters.

(c) Notwithstanding subsection (g), whoever violates this section shall be punished by a fine of not more than $1,000. Whoever knowingly and willfully files a frivolous report of child abuse or or neglect under this section shall be punished by: (i) a fine of not more
than $2,000 for the first offense; (ii) imprisonment in a house of correction for not more
than 6 months and a fine of not more than $2,000 for the second offense; (iii)
imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than 2 1/2 years and a fine of not
more than $2,000 for the third and subsequent offenses.

Any mandated reporter who has knowledge of child abuse or neglect that results in
serious bodily injury or death of a child and willfully fails to report such abuse or neglect
shall be punished with a fine of up to $5,000 or imprisonment in a house of correction
for not more than 2 1/2 years or by both such fine and imprisonment; and, upon the
guilty finding or a continuance without a finding, the court shall notify any appropriate
licensing authority of the mandated reporter’s violation of this paragraph.

(g) No mandated reporter shall be liable in any civil or criminal action for filing a report
under this section or for contacting local law enforcement authorities or the child
advocate, if the report or contact was made in good faith, was not frivolous, and the
reporter did not cause the abuse or neglect. No other person filing a report under this
section shall be liable in any civil or criminal action by reason of the report of it was
made in good faith and if that person did not perpetrate or inflict the reported abuse or
cause the reported neglect. Any person filing a report under this section may be liable in
a civil or criminal action if the department or a district attorney determines that the
person filing the report may have perpetrated or inflicted the abuse or caused the
neglect.

(h) No employer shall discharge, discriminate, or retaliate against a mandated reporter
who, in good faith, files a report under this section, testifies or is about to testify in any
proceeding involving child abuse or neglect. Any employer who discharges,
discriminates, or retaliates against a mandated reporter shall be liable to the mandated
reporter for damages, costs and attorney’s fees.

Child Abuse
It is the policy FMC to adopt the following definitions of child abuse as established by
the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families.

- **Abuse:** The non-accidental commission of any act by a caretaker upon a child
  under age 18 which causes, or creates a substantial risk of, physical or emotional
  injury; or constitutes a sexual offense under the laws of the Commonwealth; or any
  sexual contact between a caretaker and a child under the care of that individual.
  This definition is not dependent upon location (i.e., abuse can occur while the child
  is in an out-of-the home or in-home setting).
- **Shaken Baby Syndrome:** Infants, babies, or small children who suffer injuries or
dead form severe shaking, jerking, pushing, or pulling may have been the victim of
Shaken Baby Syndrome. The act of shaking a baby is considered physical abuse,
as spinal, head and neck injuries often result from violently shaking young children.
- **Neglect:** Failure by a caretaker, either deliberately or through negligence or inability
to take those actions necessary to provide a child with minimally adequate food, or
other essential care; provided, however, that such inability is not due solely to
inadequate economic resources or solely to the existence of a handicapping condition. This definition is no dependent upon location (i.e. neglect can occur while the child is in an out-of-home setting).

- **Emotional Injury**: An impairment to or disorder of the intellectual or psychological capacity of a child as evidenced by observable and substantial reduction in the child's ability to function within a normal range of performance and behavior.

- **Physical Injury**: Death; or fracture of a bone; subdural hematoma, burns, impairment of any organ, and any other such nontrivial injury; or soft tissue swelling or skin bruising, depending on such factors as the child’s age, circumstances under which the injury occurred and the number and location of bruises; or addiction to drug or drugs at birth; or failure to thrive.

- **Sexual Abuse**: There are many definitions of child sexual abuse. FMC has adopted the following definition to characterize child sexual abuse:

  Any sexual action (including sexual contact and such non-contact acts as exhibitionism, exposure to pornography, voyeurism, and communicating in a sexual manner, including by telephone or internet) involving a minor (or minors) in which one party exerts power over the other - for example, via a significant age or developmental difference, psychological coercion, physical force, or extreme social pressure.

We do not intend, through this characterization, to make a legalistic judgment about consensual teen sexual activity. We are concerned about abuses of power and authority. Please read the above characterization in that light.

**FMC Protocol for Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse Within the FMC Community**

Responsibility for supporting the safety of all children within the FMC community is shared by all members, attenders, volunteers, and paid staff. Our commitment to fostering the safety of and nurturing every child who participates in the activities and programs offered by FMC is reflected in the FMC Policy on Child Safety, the Protocol for Reporting and Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse, and this Protocol for Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse Within the FMC Community.

**Qualifications and Screening for Child/Youth Workers**

All individuals working with children/youth, regardless or length of time as members/attenders, will be screened. Screenings include an application form, references, an interview, and a release for FMC to perform a national criminal background check.

New attenders must wait six months before beginning the screening process to have responsibility with FMC children (an exception may be made if the applicant can directly from another Friends meeting and has references for his or her work with children there).
Children/Youth workers will be mature and responsible individuals who are capable of supervising the children being served. Workers under the age of eighteen will be in an assistant capacity under the direct supervision of an adult child worker.

All child workers will be provided with a packet which includes the FMC Policy on Child Safety, the Protocol for Reporting and Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse, the Protocol for Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse, the Code of Conduct, and relevant resource materials preventing sexual abuse of children, web sites, safety check lists, etc. All approval to work with children is subject to the ongoing approval of the Resident Friend and the Youth Ministries and Education Coordinator.

**Training of Child Workers**

Training is offered regularly to all child workers. The Resident Friend is responsible for ensuring this training for child workers is available. This will include, but not be limited to, a review of responsibilities prior to assuming responsibilities for care of children, and an annual training (perhaps with an outside expert hired for that purpose). Training including a job description, FMC Policy on Child Safety and its related protocols, resource information, crisis procedures, mandated reporting laws, and information about abuse and neglect. Prior to assuming responsibilities for child care, all child workers will the signed the Code of Conduct. *(See attached Code of Conduct)*

**Child Safety Program Guidelines**

The following Program Guidelines set forth the safeguards that FMC has established to promote child safety and reduce the risk of child abuse.

A. All child workers will consider risk factors, such as isolation of location, supervision, and the ages of participating children when planning an FMC sponsored event.

B. Safety checklists will be available and should be reviewed by those providing childcare at FMC, including retreats, youth retreats, and field trips.

C. At least two unrelated child workers will be assigned to each class (and will be assigned to Youth Group events, and to child care for Meeting events), if children go outdoors to play, they will also be accompanied by two unrelated Child workers. If for some temporary reason only one worker is available, a “roamer” will check in periodically.

D. The Youth Ministry and Education Coordinator and others check in during class through the windows in all classroom doors. Parents and staff may leave or enter any classroom at any time.

E. FMC will provide information about risk reduction and awareness for parents, volunteers, and other members of the community.

F. Written permission for children under the age of eighteen is obtained from parents for their child to participate in any activity that takes place away from Friends Meeting at Cambridge.

G. There are opportunities for evaluation by participants and parents through written (including anonymous) and/or verbal feedback will be provided. FMC’s programs strive for openness in planning and publicity of events and activities. This openness includes communication ahead of time with parents and community, with written
descriptions, announcements, and/or invitations to parents and community members to attend, participate in, or observe the events.

H. The Protocol for Reporting and Responding to Child Abuse is well publicized and available on the FMC website.

I. The FMC First Day School curriculum, and other programs (i.e. Our Whole Lives), will support age-appropriate education regarding sexuality, personal boundaries, and personal assertiveness.

CODE OF CONDUCT for CHILD/YOUTH WORKERS at FRIENDS MEETING AT CAMBRIDGE

Name of child worker: _______________________

“Child workers” refers to all paid and volunteer staff for FMC child and youth programs, including retreats.

Child workers with Friends Meeting at Cambridge have been given a sacred trust - to help the youth and children of FMC to grow in the Spirit and grow safely. In light of this responsibility, workers are called to on to meet specific expectations in their work:

1. Appropriate interpersonal boundaries - Adults should model respectful and nurturing behavior - children will follow their lead. Adults should be attentive to appropriate dress, use of language, and demonstrations of affection and encouragement. Adults should never intentionally engage in unnecessary contact with the “bathing suit” area of a child’s body unless they are required to do so (i.e. to assist a very young child in the bathroom or to change an infant/toddlers diaper).

2. In the area of physical contact, the general guideline is to allow the child or youth to initiate the contact, and expect the worker to end it. Whenever questions arise about appropriate physical contact and expressions of affection, workers are reminded that they are the adults and that they have the responsibility to behave maturely. All people have different comfort levels with touch, and workers should be sensitive to each individual’s boundaries.

3. There should be no sexualized behavior - teasing and joking with sexual overtones and content is not acceptable.

4. “Friendship” with child workers can serve as important mentors and guides for youth, and in this way might be seen as friends to individual children. But, FMC programs are to serve the children and not the needs of the worker. A worker who “needs” you friends may present boundary problems for both children and other staff. Any relationship with children outside the program, should be undertaken only with the knowledge and consent of the child and their parents/guardians; supervisory staff should be made aware of these activities.
5. Child workers for FMC are responsible not only to children, but to their families and FMC as well. You must not keep information to themselves if they suspect that a child is a victim of abuse, is suicidal, has a serious drug problem, or if there are other concerns for the child’s safety. For this reason, please try never to give children or youth the impression that they will keep secrets for them. When information is of a major crisis nature, workers should encourage children to seek help from a parent/guardian or other authority figure. Please consult with your supervisor, the Youth Ministries and Education Coordinator, the Youth and Families Coordinator, or the Resident Friend about an appropriate course of action.

6. One-on-one conversations can provide important mentoring for young people, and are not meant to be avoided, but to be handled with care. Pay attention to isolation and whenever possible, find a spot in a space that is not isolated, indoors or outdoors, where you can be observed. In a small room, it is good practice to keep the door ajar. Workers should ask if there is anyone who could helpfully be present, youth or adult. Maximize accountability by speaking about the session to the coordinator or other staff, even in a general way to maintain confidentiality. Make sure that any crisis situation gets immediate attention. Attend to power and control dynamics. Place yourself opposite the child, making sure that you are not between them and the door. Any physical contact, should be reassuring, but considerate of physical boundaries and emotional vulnerability.

7. The manner in which the child worker presents themselves online should be in keeping with the way them present themselves in person. Digital and social media should not be used for one-on-one extended communications between a child worker and a minor. Any communication that is sent via digital means (i.e. emails, social networking sites, Instant Messages, texts, online gaming, etc.) is not confidential.

I have read and understand the FMC Policy on Child Safety, the Protocol in Reporting and Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse, the Protocol for Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse. I agree to abide by the FMC Policy on Child Safety and Protocols, as well as this Code of Conduct during my work with FMC children/youth.

Signed: _____________________                      Date: ________________________