

CHILD SAFETY PACKET

FRESH POND MONTHLY MEETING- DECEMBER 2009

The discussion for reducing the risk of childhood sexual abuse at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting started in 2004. Bill How was working with the New England Yearly Meeting Ministry and Worship committee to develop policies and practices for child safety for NEYM activities. Bill presented material from Reducing the Risk, Making Your Church Safe from Child Sexual Abuse booklet and DVD during an adult ed session in 2004. The information developed by NEYM can be downloaded at www@neym.org

Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting began discerning our plan for child safety in 2005 during Clerks Meetings and meetings for Ministry and Counsel. We read the Reducing the Risk booklet and watched the DVD that Bill brought to us, read all the information developed by NEYM and consulted with Friends Meeting at Cambridge. Friends Meeting at Cambridge had been working on the same topic for two years and were further along in the process of developing policies and procedures related to child safety. Friends Meeting at Cambridge was very generous in sharing the work that they had already done. Those working with this topic quickly became aware of the challenges. Reducing the risk of childhood sexual abuse is a difficult topic to discern, discuss and develop policies and procedures for. The work can trigger people physically, emotionally and spiritually requiring much care and tenderness during the discernment and development process.

Meeting for Ministry and Counsel named an ad hoc committee in 2006 to sheppard the process of developing practices and procedures to reduce the risk of childhood sexual abuse at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting. The members of the ad hoc committee members included the co-clerks of Ministry and Counsel, a representative from the First Day School Committee and a representative from the Child Care Committee at the time. These were Laura Street, Lynn Taber, Pat Moyer, Karin Downs with support from Nina Fischer. The ad hoc committee was called the Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Committee and had its first meeting in April, 2006. Shortly after its inception the committee discerned to change its name to the Child Safety Committee to prevent raising fears for children hearing about work and for simplicity. The committee also broaden the scope of the work from reducing the risk of childhood sexual abuse to include any concerns of neglect, emotional and physical abuse, inappropriate touch or an allegation of child sexual abuse. The Child Safety Committee met faithfully and diligently throughout the next two years.

The committee regularly brought their work for discernment to the Meeting for Ministry Counsel committee which changed its name to the Ministry and Worship group in 2007, the Child Care Committee, the First Day School Committee and the Adult Education Committee, which combined and changed its name to the Quaker Education and Child Care Committee (QECC) in 2007. Their work was also brought to all child care workers at the time. The committee's work had been richly seasoned by many people on many

committees. There were several well attended adult education sessions for our faith community to update members and attenders at Fresh Pond about the committee's work. The Child Safety Committee laid itself down in July 2008 after completing the discernment and development of policies and procedures for reducing the risk of childhood abuse at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting. It was challenging work on a difficult topic, no one wants to think about the possibility of child abuse happening within our faith community. Some members of the original Child Safety Committee carried each piece of the committee's work to Meetings to Conduct Business after the committee had laid itself down until each piece had been further seasoned and approved by Meeting to Conduct Business.

A lawyer, recommended by Friends Meeting at Cambridge, was retained in 2008 to complete a legal review of all of the policies and procedures for reducing the risk of childhood abuse at Fresh Pond Meeting once they had been approved by Meeting to Conduct Business and prior to their implementation. All of the material was sent to the lawyer in September, 2009. The material included the following: (dates of when approved by Meeting to Conduct Business are also noted)

Minute of Concern for Children's Safety at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting
Approved 11/5/06

Code of Conduct for Youth Workers at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting
Approved 12/2/07

Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting Incident Report
Approved 2/3/08

Revised Minute of Concern for Children's Safety at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting
Approved 9/7/08

Protocol for Response to Allegations of Child Abuse at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting
Approved 4/5/09

Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting Child Abuse Response Checklist
Approved 7/19/09

The legal review was completed in October, 2009. QECC completed the edits recommended by the lawyer. The Child Safety Packet, including the Minute of Concern for Children at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting, the Code of Conduct for Youth Workers at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting, the Protocol for Response to Allegations of Child Abuse at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting, the Child Abuse Response Checklist and the Incident Report, were approved at the Meeting to Conduct Business on 12/6/09. The recommended annual timeline for child safety work (also imbedded in the Protocol for Response) was also approved at the 12/6/09 Meeting to Conduct Business. Copies of the Code of Conduct were passed out to those attending at that Meeting to Conduct Business to sign. All materials in the Child Safety Packet were sent via email to Fresh Pond Meeting members and attenders. The foundation work for reducing the risk of

childhood abuse at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting is complete.

ANNUAL TIMELINE FOR CHILD SAFETY WORK

JANUARY- The co-clerks of the FPMM will gather those who are eligible to serve on the CRC (Core Response Committee) for that year. Eligible members of the CRC will have the following information about reducing the risk of childhood abuse at FPMM: Minute of Concern for Children at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting, Code of Conduct, Incident Report, Response Checklist and Protocol for Response to Allegations of Child Abuse at FPMM in order to conduct the committee's work. CRC members will arrange how to reach each other in an emergency. At the time of the January meeting, the CRC will check on the ongoing relationship with the FPMM's legal advisor and arrange a replacement if he is no longer able to serve in that role.

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER- The CRC will publicize its existence, function and protocol to the meeting as a whole.

EACH WINTER- The CRC will plan and carry out educational activities for reducing the risk of child abuse for the upcoming year.

EACH SPRING-

The CRC will report briefly to the FPMM, being mindful of confidentiality. This timeline is flexible based on the needs of FPMM during any particular year.

Minute of Concern for Children at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting

Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting has always counted many children among its members and attenders. Attention to the needs of children is important to us. Nurturing children's spiritual journey and attending to each child's safety are essential to our faith community. Children need to be able to trust adults to attend to these needs. Sadly, sometimes this trust can be broken in our society.

Our work as a meeting includes raising our awareness of childhood abuse. This includes concerns of neglect, emotional and physical abuse, inappropriate touch or an allegation of child sexual abuse. We are committed to creating and maintaining policies and procedures that reduce the risk of harm happening to the children in our care.

Approved in Meeting for Business 9/7/08

Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting
Child Abuse Response Checklist

This sheet is to be used as a guide by the core response team to be sure all information has been considered and completed. Please document, in writing, all decisions made and actions taken and keep this documentation with this checklist for each allegation of abuse. Note that not all of these steps may be needed in each case. Please refer to Protocol for Response Form for details.

Name of the child _____

Date of alleged incident _____

1. INCIDENT REPORT completed (*see Incident Report Form*)

Consider obtaining separate incident reports from other participants or witnesses as appropriate

Name of reporter

Date of report

Is the child safe?

What has to happen to get or keep child safe?

Concrete factual information re incident-- date, time, location, names of all present, parents told, others consulted, who has custody?

2. CONTACT PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN/FAMILY

When were parents/family contacted?

Documentation of contact (time, content of discussion)

What support has been offered? (visitation, worship, counselors, support)

Confidentiality wishes of family

3. CONTACT COMMUNITY MEMBERS

As appropriate to avoid minimalization and escalation

When/how were the following people contacted:

Response committee

Clerk

Attorney

Insurance carrier

Counselor for child/family

Counselor for perpetrator

Is there any conflict of interest?

Discern when/how the FPMM community will be informed with a concern of confidentiality for all involved

Who already knows within the FPMM community

4. CONTACT ALLEGED PERPETRATOR

When/how will the alleged perpetrator be contacted?

Will there be repercussions to the child or family?

Is it safe for the child?

Is it safe for the alleged perpetrator-- does he/she have supports?

Should the alleged perpetrator be asked not to have contact with the child?

Should the alleged perpetrator be excused from certain activities or asked to separate themselves from community events?

Inform perpetrator when report to Department of Children & Families completed, if making report to DCF discerned to be needed

Confidentiality wishes of alleged perpetrator

5. FILE A REPORT TO THE STATE - The core response team will discern who will report incident of suspected abuse, if necessary, to the Department of Children and Families.

Has the oral report to the state been made within 24 hours of the allegation?

Has the written report been completed within 24 hours of the oral report?

Document written report and keep copy

All documents relating to child abuse incident will be kept secure by clerk/co-clerk of FPMM or their designees

Document when and to whom report is made

How is follow-up with the state planned?

What are the timelines and description of what the state will do?

6. WORSHIP

Prayer is vital to remain centered during this process on a case by case basis with consultation of the Core Response Team

7. COMMUNITY

The Core Response Committee will discern how communication with the wider community will proceed, in a way that balances concrete facts and confidentiality on a case by case basis with consultation with meeting clerks.

Consider calling a community meeting

8. IMMEDIATE FOLLOW UP

Maintain contact with:

Child/family or supports

Alleged perpetrator and family or supports

Community

Legal advisors as necessary

State agency

Under what conditions will each party to the incident be in the community and various activities?

9. FOLLOW UP

What structures are in place to prevent this from happening again?

Has the perpetrator been directed to appropriate counseling, rehabilitation, and/or legal intervention?

Does the community structure at FPMM need to change based on our experience?

10. LONG TERM FOLLOW UP

Plan for debriefing and feedback.

What did we learn?

What do we want to do differently?

Did we handle confidentiality appropriately?

How will the confidential information about this incident be maintained as time passes?

Consider sharing with other communities or people who have been through similar events.

Approved 7/19/09

Code of Conduct for Youth Workers at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting Approved 12/2/07

“Youth workers” refers to all paid and volunteer staff for FPMM who work with children under the age of 18. FPMM recommends having two or more people present whenever working with children. Youth workers at FPMM have been entrusted to help the children of FPMM grow in the Spirit, and to grow safely. In light of this responsibility, youth workers are called on to meet specific expectations in their work:

- 1) **Appropriate interpersonal boundaries**-Youth workers should model respectful and nurturing behavior. Youth workers should dress appropriately and be attentive to use of language and demonstrations of affection and encouragement. Youth workers should never intentionally engage in contact with the private areas of a child’s body.

- 2) **Physical expression of affection**-Whenever questions arise about appropriate expressions of affection, youth workers are reminded that they have the responsibility to behave maturely. Our guideline is to allow the children to initiate the hug, and expect the youth worker to end it. All people, adult and children, have different comfort levels with touch and youth workers should be aware of this.

- 3) **No sexualized behavior**-Teasing and joking with sexual overtones and content is not acceptable.

- 4) **“Friendship” with children**-Youth workers can serve as important mentors and guides for children. In the course of leading a retreat or teaching a First Day School class, children may look to youth workers for direction for some of the problems that they face. Any relationship with a child outside the program should be undertaken only with full knowledge and consent of the child’s parent or guardian. Quaker Education/Child Care Committee should be made aware of any outside activities.

- 5) **Conversations with children**-can provide important mentoring for children, not to be avoided, but to be handled with care. Avoid being alone with a child, pay attention to isolation. Whenever possible, find a space that is not isolated where you can be observed. Keep the door ajar if you are in a room. Ask if there is anyone else who could helpfully be present, child or adult. Be aware that you are in a position of authority to the children. 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. Respond to crisis immediately.

- 6) **Responsibility**-Youth workers for FPMM are responsible not only to children, but to their families and FPMM as well. If you suspect that a child is a victim of abuse, is suicidal, or has a drug problem, you must not keep this information to yourself. Don’t give children the impression that you will keep secrets for them. When you have received information that indicates a potential threat to the child or someone else, encourage the child to seek help from a parent or another trusted adult. Consult with your supervisor about an appropriate course of action. Complete an incident form when you and your supervisor feel cause for concern.

I agree to abide by this code of conduct in my work with the youth of FPMM.

signed: _____ date: _____

CONFIDENTIAL

FRESH POND MONTHLY MEETING

INCIDENT REPORT

Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting is committed to creating and maintaining policies and procedures that reduce the risk of harm to any child under the age of 18 in our care. We consider any sexual involvement of an adult with a child or between children to be of concern. We take such behavior extremely seriously. We also take seriously the non-accidental injury, risk of injury or neglect of a child by an adult or caretaker. This incident form is to be completed by anyone who suspects child abuse and given to the clerk of FPMM.

If you suspect that child abuse or neglect may have occurred please contact one of the members of the core response team; co-clerks of FPMM, Worship and Ministry Committee or Quaker Education and Child Care Committee. Feel free to provide any additional information on the back of this form. Take appropriate steps to keep information confidential. The allegation will be discussed among the Core Response Committee and all related documentation must be kept secure.

1. Why are you concerned about this child? What have you specifically seen or heard? When did this happen?

2. Is there anything that you have noticed in the past that now adds to your concern?

3. What are the circumstances under which you became aware of the injuries, abuse or neglect?

4. To your knowledge, is anyone else aware of what you have seen or heard from or about this child?

5. Is the child currently safe? Why or why not?

6. Are there steps, immediate or otherwise, that you would suggest be taken?

Writer's Name, Address and Telephone(s)

Name of core response team member form given to

Date core response team member contacted _____

TO BE COMPLETED BY CORE RESPONSE MEMBER

Child's Name _____

Child's Date of Birth _____

Names, Address and telephone of parents or custodians

Who has custody of the child?

Date incident form completed _____

Completed by _____

Action Taken

We consider this information to be highly confidential. Take appropriate steps to maintain confidentiality such as those outlined in the Response Checklist and other reasonable measures.

Approved 2/3/08

Minute of Concern for Children at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting

Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting has always counted many children among its members and attenders. Attention to the needs of children is important to us. Nurturing children's spiritual journey and attending to each child's safety are essential to our faith community. Children need to be able to trust adults to attend to these needs. Sadly, sometimes this trust can be broken in our society.

Our work as a meeting includes raising our awareness of childhood abuse. This includes concerns of neglect, emotional and physical abuse, inappropriate touch or an allegation of child sexual abuse. We are committed to creating and maintaining policies and procedures that reduce the risk of harm happening to the children in our care.

Approved in Meeting for Business 9/7/08

Protocol for Response to Allegations of Child Abuse at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting

The Protocol for Response will be put into action if a child experiences child abuse or discloses any allegation of child abuse or neglect no matter whether the abuse occurred while the child was in the care of Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting or somewhere else.

In the event of an allegation of child abuse, the Core Response Committee, (CRC) will convene within first 24 hours of allegation. This committee is charged with addressing FPMM's response to the allegation. The committee will listen carefully to all parties involved, assist individuals in seeking help as needed, communicate with any outside agencies as mandated by law, maintain communication with the meeting as well as promote safety and healing within the faith community.

The CRC may also work as a resource to the staff or committees working with the children at FPMM.

The CRC will consist of the co-clerks of the meeting, the co-clerks of ministry and worship and the co-clerks of the Quaker education and child care committee or their designees.

In January the co-clerks of the FPMM will gather those who are eligible to serve on the CRC for that year. Eligible members of the CRC will have the following information about reducing the risk of childhood abuse at FPMM: Minute of Concern for Children at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting, Code of Conduct, Incident Report, Response Checklist and Protocol for Response to Allegations of Child Abuse at FPMM in order to conduct the committee's work. CRC members will arrange how to reach each other in an emergency. At the time of the January meeting, the CRC will check on the ongoing relationship with the FPMM's legal advisor and arrange a replacement if he is no longer able to serve in that role. Each September/October the CRC will publicize its existence, function and protocol to the meeting as a whole. Each winter, the CRC will plan and carry out educational activities for reducing the risk of child abuse for the upcoming year. Each spring, the CRC will report briefly to the FPMM, being mindful of confidentiality. This timeline is flexible based on the needs of FPMM during any particular year.

Should an allegation of child abuse occur within our meeting, the CRC will discern three people from its members, or their designees, within 24 hours, to work as the Response Team. The Response Team will be responsible to work on a specific allegation of abuse. These members will be chosen based on discernment and abilities best suited for the particular incident involved. A range of situations may come before the Core Response Committee. This range may include concerns of neglect, physical abuse, inappropriate touch or an allegation of child sexual abuse.

The following will serve as a timeline to guide the committee in its work. In addition, the Response Team will be guided by the Minute of Concern for Children at Fresh Pond Monthly Meeting, Code of Conduct, Incident Report, Response Checklist and Protocol of Responses to Allegations of Child Abuse, all approved by meeting for business at FPMM.

Immediate Response - Within First 24 Hours

- 1) Convene the Core Response Committee to discern/assign three people from its membership or appointed to serve on the Response Team
- 2) Obtain a report from all parties involved-document facts only (avoid exaggeration)
- 3) Complete Incident Report
- 4) Consider safety of child and respond as needed
- 5) Notify parent/guardian
- 6) If alleged perpetrator is a FPMM volunteer or staff member, take steps to stop all contact between the alleged perpetrator and children under the care of FPMM
- 7) File oral report, followed by written report to state agency if indicated
Cambridge DCF Office-1-617-520-8700
Statewide DCF Contact-1-617-748-2000
Copy of blank written report can be downloaded at:
http://www.mass.gov/Eeohhs2/docs/dss/can_reporting_form.pdf
- 8) If state agency notified, keep written record of who received oral report and when oral and written report were completed
- 9) Remain mindful throughout this process that worship for discernment is required
- 10) Invite an eldering team to pray for Response Team

Short Term Response - Within First Week

- 1) Notify the parent or guardian of the child if a report was made to state agency
- 2) Provide support as necessary and as requested by child and family
- 3) Notify the alleged perpetrator if a report was made to state agency as appropriate
- 4) Provide referral to services, including a support committee, as necessary to the alleged perpetrator as appropriate
- 5) Clarify with alleged perpetrator any restrictions the Response Team deems necessary on his/her activity or responsibilities within the community
- 6) Notify the following of the report, as appropriate, legal advisor, police, insurance agent

Lawyer-David Aptaker 1-617-776-2211

davidaptaker.law@verizon.net 265 Medford St. Suite 402 Somerville, MA 02143
Cambridge Police Dept-front desk-1-617-349-3301
Insurance Agent-contact treasurer for details

7) Plan for communication of some kind to FPMM, if appropriate. Consider what should and should not be said

8) Take appropriate steps to keep information confidential.
The information to be kept information confidential among CRC only and all related documentation will be kept secure. Only those with supervisory or organizational need-to-know should be informed on the identity of the alleged victim or alleged perpetrator.

9) Remain mindful throughout this process that worship for discernment is required

Intermediate Term Response - Within First Three Months

1) Maintain contact with:

Child/family or supports

Alleged perpetrator/family or supports

Community

Legal Advisors, as necessary

State Agency

2) Discern what conditions each party (person) to the incident will be involved in the community and various activities

3) Remember each incident is unique, specifics can not be planned for in advance

4) A response to each incident must be faithfully discerned

5) Remain mindful throughout this process that worship and prayer are central

Long Term Response - Within First Year

1) Review incident to discern what, if anything, can be done to reduce the likelihood of a reoccurrence

2) Remain mindful throughout this process that worship for discernment is required

Approved in Meeting for Business 4/5/09