

[Submitted for 2019 Annual Sessions]

**ILLINOIS YEARLY MEETING
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
CHILDCARE POLICIES AND GUIDELINES
FOR A SAFE CONGREGATION**

AS OF XX/XX/2019

Table of Contents

1. ILYM Faith and Practice Abuse and Exploitation Statement and the ILYM Anti-Harassment Policy
2. ILYM Child and Youth Abuse and Harassment Policy
3. Childcare Guidelines for Volunteers and Employees
4. Policy Concerning Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse or Neglect
5. Illinois Mandated Reporters and Reporting Training

Appendices

1. ILYM Volunteers Working with Children and Youth Affidavit
2. Volunteer Statement/Waiver
3. Staff Checklist

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Abuse and Exploitation

Friends' testimonies, along with our belief that there is that of God in everyone, encourage a heightened awareness of the need for care in our relationships with one another. Still, Quakers recognize that, despite our testimonies and our highest aspirations, members and attenders of Friends meetings are not exempted from weaknesses. We are all capable of hurting each other, and we are all at risk of being hurt. Some hurtful incidents are easily rectified. Others are not.

Abuse, exploitation, harassment, bullying, and other similar types of misconduct – whether physical, verbal, sexual, or emotional – are contrary to Friends' testimonies. Individual Friends bear responsibility in those areas; so too do Quaker meetings. Every meeting and worship group must do whatever it can to provide a safe and loving space for everyone, as Friends seek to affirm the worth of all children of God.

Illinois Yearly Meeting Faith and Practice¹

{This section of Faith and Practice has not been approved as of May 2019}

ILYM Anti-Harassment Policy

It is the goal of Illinois Yearly Meeting of Friends to provide an environment free of harassment. Illinois Yearly Meeting condemns any form of harassment based on a person's race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, sexual identity or other protected characteristics. Actions or remarks involving ethnic animosity, or conduct of an offensive sexual nature, will not be tolerated.

Each member of the Meeting community has a responsibility to behave in a manner that does not involve harassment. Employees and volunteers have the responsibility to bring any form of harassment to the attention of the Presiding Clerk(s). Complaints concerning harassment will be investigated promptly by Illinois Yearly Meeting Presiding Clerk(s) with the Harassment Review Committee in a confidential manner. Investigation results generally will be reviewed with the persons involved.

Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including being asked to leave the Meeting or notification of local police for adults (see mandated reporting guidelines for situations involving children) will be taken against anyone engaging in any form of harassment. Such disciplinary actions to be taken are at the sole discretion of the Meeting Clerk(s) and appropriate committee clerks.

ILYM Child and Youth Abuse and Harassment Policy

Statement of Conduct for Working with Children and Youth

Illinois Yearly Meeting is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Meeting activities. It is the duty of all members, attenders, guests and any other volunteers to safeguard, to the best of their ability, to protect the welfare of children and to prevent the physical, verbal, sexual, or emotional abuse of children and young people with whom they come into contact. However, an additional level of responsibility is expected of those who have official roles, such as teaching or being employed as a staff person with youth in the Meeting. Also see Mandatory Reporting section.

Definitions

Volunteer and Staff: Any adult involved with Illinois Yearly Meeting activities who has direct interactions with children and youth, either supervised or unsupervised. This includes, but is not limited to staff, First Day School teachers, Religious Education Committee members, and their spouses, partners and/or legal guardians that host children and/or youth for activities or outings or who might drive students to events or functions.

Child and Youth: Young people involved with the Illinois Yearly Meeting under the age of majority. (Children are 12 and under, Youths are 13-17)

Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse refers to engaging in implicit or explicit sexual acts with a child, or forcing or encouraging a child to engage in implicit or explicit sexual acts, alone or with another person of any age and/or gender identity.

Additional examples of sexual abuse could include non-touching offenses such as, but are not limited to:

- Indecent exposure
- Exposing a student to sexual or pornographic material

Sexual harassment: Sexual harassment refers to sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. In some cases, sexual harassment precedes sexual abuse and is a technique used by sexual predators to desensitize or “groom” their victims.

Examples of sexual harassment could include, but are not limited to:

- Sexual advances
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one’s sex life, and comments about an individual’s sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or drawings
- Sexual leering or whistling, any inappropriate physical contact, such as brushing or touching, obscene language or gestures, and suggestive or insulting comments

Assault and abuse: Physical assault or abuse occurs when a someone inflicts a physical injury to a child that is non-accidental, including bruises, bites, bone fractures, cuts, welts, and burns; Creates a substantial risk of physical harm to a child; Violates a court order that prohibits the perpetrator from having access to the child; Deliberately inflicts cruel or unusual treatment which results in physical or mental suffering by the child; Inflicts excessive corporal punishment (NOTE: If a parent or caretaker causes physical injury during overly harsh discipline, it does not matter that he or she did not intend to hurt the child.); Gives or allows a controlled substance to be given to a child under 18 years of age; Exposes the child to the manufacture of methamphetamine.

Harassment/Psychological abuse: Psychological abuse is a form of abuse characterized by a person subjecting or exposing another person to behavior that may result in psychological trauma including anxiety, chronic depression or post-traumatic stress disorder. Such abuse can include verbal and/or emotional abuse. It is often associated with situations of power imbalance and can include bullying, intimidation, “gas lighting” and extreme defamation.

Volunteer and Staff Selection and Screening

The following screening steps must be completed prior to participation in Religious Education activities. (A sample of a Volunteers Working with Children & Youth Affidavit form can be found in Appendix A.)

All volunteers interested in participating in Illinois Yearly Meeting Religious Education activities must:

- Volunteers must complete a Volunteers Working with Children & Youth Affidavit form. Volunteers and staff must authorize the Meeting to conduct a criminal background and the State Sex Offender Database checks (subject to local laws and practices).
- Volunteers and staff must meet Meeting requirements for working with children. Illinois Yearly Meeting requires that any volunteer or staff member who has admitted to, been convicted of, or otherwise found to have engaged in sexual abuse or harassment be prohibited from working with children and/or youth in a Meeting context.
- Volunteers should have been a regular member or attender of a Monthly Meeting for at least one year before working with children.
- Whether a volunteer is selected is solely at the discretion of the Religious Education Committee.

Illinois Yearly Meeting will maintain all records of criminal background checks, waivers, and Sex Offender screening results for adults working with minors in perpetuity in our files and/or with the firm doing the checks.

Training

Illinois Yearly Meeting will provide these guidelines to all First Day School volunteers and childcare providers. Volunteers and childcare providers who wish further training can work with the Religious Education Committee to obtain it, possibly in consultation with the local Police Department. All Volunteers and childcare providers need to acknowledge receipt and understanding of these policies.

Allegation Reporting Guidelines

Illinois Yearly Meeting is committed to protecting the safety and well being of children and will not tolerate their abuse or harassment. All allegations of abuse or harassment will be taken seriously and must be handled in accord with the Illinois Yearly Meeting Sexual Abuse and Harassment Allegation Reporting Guidelines, found in Appendix B.

Volunteer and Childcare Provider Policy Acknowledgment Form

I, _____, acknowledge that I have received, understand and agree to the Illinois Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends Abuse and Harassment Policy guidelines and policies.

Name

Date

ILYM Childcare Guidelines for Volunteers and Employees

Our experience is that God speaks to and works through children as well as adults. Religious education needs to respect, affirm and value children's insights. *Faith and Practice, Britain.*

Child-care workers, teachers and religious education staff must agree to the following Child and Youth Safety Code:

Age definition

Children: Age 12 and younger; Youth: 13-18

Supervision of Children

Children must be under the supervision of a staff member or volunteer at all times. Staff members or volunteers under the age of 18 will be supervised by an adult staff member.

At no time is a staff person to be alone with an individual child where they cannot be observed by others. If an adult is alone with a child or youth the door to the room should be open. Exception: diapering or assisting in toilet training.

Restroom supervision: Staff will make sure the restroom is not occupied by an unknown individual before allowing children to use the facilities. A staff member will stand in the doorway while children are using the restroom.

The children, under the age of 8, will be restricted from entering the kitchen and storage areas at all times during child care hours. At least one parent/guardian must be in the building if there is a child under 8. If a child is sick or injured, the parent/guardian will be notified and any immediate first aid response will be followed.

Outside Activities

Any Religious Education (RE) related activities held on the grounds of the Illinois Yearly Meeting and outside will be supervised by RE staff and/or volunteers. During Religious Education programs children/youth are not allowed to leave the grounds unless approved by their parent/legal guardian and/or staff or RE volunteers. Children and/or youth leaving the grounds of the Meeting during Religious Education programs are the responsibility of their parent/legal guardian.

Children are only allowed outside under adult supervision. The streets are not a part of the Illinois Yearly Meeting.

Appropriate Behavior of Children, Youth and Consequences

There are times when the behavior of an individual student interferes with the interest of the group. When such a situation occurs, the issue of the inappropriate behavior must be

addressed. Quaker principles of peacefully and respectfully resolving conflict need to be applied when possible. Peaceful strategies include minimizing the attention given to negative behavior, requesting a period of silence until tensions are resolved, assigning a time-out period. The goals for the child's appropriate behavior will be discussed with the child and parent/guardian.

Occasionally, a child will not conform to group standards of behavior. In such cases, if negative behavior persists and cannot be resolved a "clearness" committee is recommended composed of parent/guardian, religious education staff, and a ministry and counsel committee member to identify the issues and how best to support this individual towards future success.

Childcare Provider as a Role Model

Children look to adults as role models and examples of proper behavior. Training is part of teaching, but how we as teachers conduct ourselves influences children the most. Thus Quaker values should be modeled by staff as an important part of the Religious Education Program. Behaviors and attitudes that model these values include: patience, respect, courtesy, inclusiveness and reverence. Quaker Practices of living simply, preserving the environment, advocating peace and a more just society can be taught through example and instruction.

Appropriate dress and language use are important in setting a proper learning and spiritual atmosphere.

Illinois Yearly Meeting House and Grounds is a smoke and gun free environment.

Health Requirements

All child-care workers must wash hands before handling food. All dishes and silverware must be washed in dishwasher.

Employed adult child-care workers are required to become certified first aid responder and CPR certified with time and expenses covered by the Illinois Yearly Meeting.

At the beginning of each school year, parents will be required to fill out and sign a form describing any existing health conditions of their children as well as any food allergies they may know about.

Religious Education Committee's Responsibility

The RE Committee is charged with seeing that the elements of this policy are carried out and communicated to staff and parents. This policy will be reviewed and revised as appropriate to address any changing circumstances, laws, insurance requirements and events. Any changes will be reported to the Meeting for Business.

ILYM Policy Concerning Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse or Neglect

Purpose

To establish policy for Illinois Yearly Meeting staff employees and volunteers regarding mandated reporting requirements under the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act.

Definitions

(from the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, 325 ILCS 5/1 et seq.s)

"Child" means any person under the age of 18 years, unless legally emancipated by reason of marriage or entry into a branch of the United States armed services.

"Abused child" includes but is not limited to a child whose parent or immediate family member, or any person responsible for the child's welfare, or any individual residing in the same home as the child, or a paramour of the child's parent:

- (a) inflicts, causes to be inflicted, or allows to be inflicted upon such child physical injury, by other than accidental means, which causes death, disfigurement, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function;
- (b) creates a substantial risk of physical injury to such child by other than accidental means which would be likely to cause death, disfigurement, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function;
- (c) commits or allows to be committed any sex offense against such child, as sex offense is defined in the Illinois Criminal Code and Wrongs to Children Act, and extending those definitions of sex offenses to include children under 18 years of age;
- (d) commits or allows to be committed an act or acts of torture upon such child;
- (e) inflicts excessive corporal punishment.

"Neglected child" includes but is not limited to any child who is not receiving the proper or necessary nourishment or medically indicated treatment including food or care not provided solely on the basis of the present or anticipated mental or physical impairment as determined by a physician acting alone or in consultation with other physicians or otherwise is not receiving the proper or necessary support or medical or other remedial care recognized under State law as necessary for a child's well-being, or other care necessary for his or her well-being, including adequate food, clothing and shelter; or who is abandoned by his or her parents or other person responsible for the child's welfare without a proper plan of care.

Policy

Illinois law requires certain individuals, called mandated reporters, to immediately report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services (IDCFS) Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-25-ABUSE.

All Illinois Yearly Meeting youth program staff and volunteers are mandated reporters. NOTE: some staff employees and volunteers also may be mandated reporters by virtue of being in another category of mandated reporters, e.g., school teacher, counselor, athletics personnel.

In addition, Illinois Yearly Meeting encourages any person who is not a mandated reporter to report abuse to IDCFS if they have reasonable suspicion that a child has been abused or neglected.

Illinois Yearly Meeting thus requires all Illinois Yearly Meeting staff employees and volunteers to immediately report to IDCFS if they have reasonable cause to believe a child known to them in their official capacity may be abused or neglected.

Failure by a mandated reporter to immediately report suspected instances of child abuse or neglect to IDCFS constitutes a Class A misdemeanor. Moreover, reporting suspicions to a co-worker, supervisor, other Meeting employee – but not IDCFS – does not satisfy the legal duty to report. The only means of fulfilling one's legal obligation and avoiding legal penalty is to report the suspected child abuse or neglect to IDCFS.

Guidelines

1. Every Illinois Yearly Meeting employee or lead volunteer who has a reasonable basis to believe a child known to him/her in his/her official capacity has been abused or neglected must immediately call the IDCFS Hotline at 1-800-25-ABUSE. This hotline is staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Prior to the call (if time permits) or thereafter, the employee or volunteer who makes such a report must promptly notify the Presiding Clerk(s) that a report has been made, as well as the underlying circumstances that compelled the report. If a child is in imminent danger, the employee or volunteer should seek immediate protection for the child with the local Police Department at 911.
2. Per IDCFS, child abuse is the mistreatment of a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caretaker, someone living in their home or someone who works with or around children. The mistreatment may cause injury or must put the child at risk of physical injury. Child abuse can be physical (such as burns or broken bones), sexual (such as fondling, exposure, pornography, incest, etc.) or emotional. Neglect happens when a parent or responsible caretaker fails to provide adequate supervision, food, clothing, shelter or other basics for a child. The legal definitions of "abused child" and "neglected child" appear above in the definitions section of this policy.
3. The mandated reporter should be prepared to tell the hotline workers:
 - The child's name, address and age.
 - The nature of the suspected abuse or neglect, including when and where it occurred.
 - The names of suspected perpetrators and their relationship to the child (parent, teacher, etc.)
 - Any other information you think may help.
 - Lack of some specific information such as the address of the injured child should not preclude or delay the filing of a report.
4. Illinois Yearly Meeting recognizes and respects the sensitive nature of the information that the mandated report includes, and requires the employee or volunteer to hold that information confidential, sharing it only with the Presiding Clerk(s) at Illinois Yearly Meeting, local Police or other local law enforcement, and/or others who, based on their official capacity with Illinois Yearly Meeting, have a need to know.
5. An Illinois Yearly Meeting staff employee or volunteer who knowingly fails to report a case of suspected child abuse or neglect to IDCFS if they have reasonable cause to

believe that a child known to them in their official capacity may be abused or neglected will be disciplined up to and including termination of employment or volunteer arrangement and disqualification from future volunteer work or employment. Willful failure to report suspected child abuse or neglect is unlawful and may result in misdemeanor or felony charges, as determined by Illinois law.

6. This policy may be revised to reflect changes in other Illinois Yearly Meeting policies and procedures as well as Illinois law.
7. Mandated Reporters are required to keep informed of and abide by Illinois Yearly Meeting policy.
8. All staff and volunteers leading childcare activities and classes are required to take the Mandated Reporter free online training offered by the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services every five years. All other volunteers working with children are also strongly encouraged to take this training as well.

Immunity

Illinois law protects the identity of all mandated reporters and gives them immunity from liability as a result of good faith reports. However, any mandated reporter who fails to report an instance of child abuse or neglect commits a crime and may be prosecuted. More importantly, failing to report child abuse or neglect means that a child may continue to be abused or neglected.

Illinois Mandated Reporters and Reporter Training

All adult staff and volunteers taking a lead role (required) and other volunteers (requested) working with children and teens are asked to go through the free Illinois Mandated Reporter Training at <https://mr.dcfstraining.org> and provide the administrative coordinator a copy of their certificate of completion to have on record. If this has already been done in another capacity such as for work the staff or volunteer can submit whatever documentation they have from that instead. This is required every five years.

The purpose of this online course is to help all Illinois Mandated Reporters understand their critical role in protecting children by recognizing and reporting child abuse. Everyone who suspects child abuse or neglect should call the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-252-2873) to make a report, but Mandated Reporters are required by law to do so. The Mandated Reporter requirement includes adult Child Care Personnel and volunteers.

Staff or volunteers will have to register on the site, but the training is free. This Training Includes: a) A pre-training assessment (13 multiple-choice questions); b) 60-90 minutes of self-paced interactive training; c) A post-training assessment (13 multiple-choice questions); and d) A Certificate of Completion. The training is self-paced; someone familiar with any of the materials can go faster. The pre and post test are the same questions, but it does not give one the answers until the end. If needed, anyone can retake the post test.

The Religious Education Committee in collaboration with the Administrative Assistant will keep a record of this training in five year cycles.

ILYM Volunteers Working with Children & Youth

[This document might change once we contract with a background check provider]

Affidavit

Illinois Yearly Meeting is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all participants in Meeting activities. It is the duty of Meeting members, attenders, volunteers and employees to use their best efforts to safeguard the welfare of and prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse or harassment of every child with whom they come into contact. However, an additional level of responsibility is expected of those who have official roles working with youth in the Meeting.

Consent For Criminal Background History Check Authorization, Waiver, and Indemnity

I hereby give my permission for Illinois Yearly Meeting to obtain information relating to my criminal history record and to check the Illinois Registered Sex Offender Database. The criminal history record, as received from the reporting agencies, may include arrest and conviction data as well as plea bargains and deferred adjudication. I understand that this information will be used, in part, to determine my eligibility for a volunteer position with the Illinois Yearly Meeting childcare and/or First Day School. I also understand that as long as I remain a volunteer here, either check may be repeated at any time. I understand that I will have an opportunity to review and check on my history and that there is a procedure available for clarification, if I dispute the record as received.

I, the undersigned, do, for myself, my heirs, executors and administrators, hereby release and forever discharge and agree to indemnify Illinois Yearly Meeting and its affiliates and each of their officers, directors, employees, and agents harmless from and against any and all causes of action, suits, liabilities, costs, debts and sums of money, claims and demands whatsoever, and any and all related attorneys' fees, court costs, and other expenses resulting from the investigation of my background in connection with my application to become a volunteer.

The Religious Education Committee and/or staff will annually check the Illinois Sex Offender list for all volunteers (<http://www.isp.state.il.us>). New volunteers will be checked at the time of application.

Signature of Applicant

Please Print Name

Date

Illinois Yearly Meeting Religious Education Volunteer Application

Volunteer Position Applied for: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ____ Zip Code: _____

How long at this address? _____

If less than five years, please list prior residence(s) on the back of this sheet.

Date of birth: _____ Gender ID: Male : _____ Female: _____ Other: _____

Driver's License Number: _____

Are you a member or an attendee of a Quaker Meeting? Member: ☐ Attendee : ☐

How long have you been attending your Monthly Meeting? _____

We ask that volunteers be attenders of ILYM for at least one year.

Please give the Meeting name and year joined/started to attend: _____

Emergency Contact Information: Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____ Relationship: _____

What do you hope to gain by volunteering in Religious Education at Illinois Yearly Meeting?

Volunteer Statement/Waiver

I affirm that all of the statements in this application, and in any attachments hereto, are true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I also affirm that I have not withheld any information that would affect my application unfavorably, if disclosed. I understand that any omission of facts or misrepresentation will result in my elimination from consideration for any volunteer position with Illinois Yearly Meeting First Day School or its affiliates.

I specifically acknowledge that Illinois Yearly Meeting or its affiliates will inquire about, and I authorize them to verify, my prior employment, experience, personal references, background, including criminal background checks which may contain arrest and conviction data. I waive any right to assert that such an investigation or request constitutes an invasion of my privacy. I recognize that such inquiries are in the interest of all persons involved with Illinois Yearly Meeting Religious Education, and I fully consent to such investigations. I release Illinois Yearly Meeting, its directors and officers, employees, affiliates, volunteers, agents and representatives, as well as any third parties that the Illinois Yearly Meeting or its affiliates contact, directly or indirectly, regarding my application to, or future services with, the Illinois Yearly Meeting Religious Education program or its affiliates, from any liability in connection with the Illinois Yearly Meeting's investigation, or their contact with third parties.

I further agree to conform to the rules, regulations, and policies of Illinois Yearly Meeting Religious Education program and its affiliates, and understand that my service can be modified or terminated, with or without notice or cause, at any time, at the option of either the Illinois Yearly Meeting or its affiliates, or at my option. I understand that no representative of Illinois Yearly Meeting has the authority to enter into any agreement for service for any specified period of time, or to make any agreement contrary to the foregoing. I understand and agree that Illinois Yearly Meeting or its affiliates may, in their sole discretion, decline to accept my application for volunteer services with or without cause.

I Acknowledge That I Have Read And Understand The Above Application And Release, And That I Sign This Form Voluntarily.

Signature of Applicant

Please Print Name

Date

Staff Checklist:

One time:

- Sign the Acknowledgment of Receipt of Policies (as staff)
- Sign the Volunteer and Childcare Provider Policy Acknowledgment Form (as staff)

Ongoing Senior Staff Responsibility from the Volunteer and Childcare Provider Policy Acknowledgement Form

- Verify that each child's RE registration form includes a health form that is complete and up to date
- Conduct an inspection of the facility for any safety hazards.
- Ensure that nutritious and fresh snacks are available for the children

Annually

- Perform a Sex Offender database search annually for all volunteers and staff working with children

Every Five Years:

- Mandated Reporting from Illinois Mandated Reporters and Reporter Training (section 5)
- All adult staff and volunteers (required) with lead responsibilities for working with children and teens are asked to go through the free Illinois Mandated Reporter Training at <https://mr.dcfstraining.org>. Staff are to provide the YM Administrative Coordinator a copy of their certificate of completion to have on record. Volunteers will give the Administrative Coordinator a copy of their certificate. See Mandated Reporter Guidelines.