

St. Barnabas Lutheran Church Procedures for Alleged Child Abuse

STEPS TO BE TAKEN TO REPORT SUSPECTED/ALLEGED CHILD ABUSE AT ST. BARNABAS OR ELSEWHERE

1. All volunteers and staff are to report alleged child abuse incidents immediately
 - a) to the Police AND
 - b) to the Pastor or Church Staff AND
 - c) fill out St. Barnabas's Alleged Child Abuse Form
2. If a youth reports abuse outside the church, the same steps should be followed.
3. In case a St. Barnabas volunteer, pastor, or staff member is suspected of child abuse, the Church's Insurance Company, the Northern Illinois Synod Office, and the President of the Church Council shall be contacted and given copies of the Alleged Child Abuse Form.

1. All volunteers and staff must cooperate with any investigation, internal or external.

NOTES:

1. A Person reporting child abuse need fear no reprisal or civil action if you make your report in good faith.
2. **DO NOT disclose the identity of the reporting person, OR the accused, OR the victim OR the details of the case except to those who are professionally involved with the investigation. Confidentiality for ALL is to be respected until the process is complete.**
3. St. Barnabas Lutheran Church will faithfully respond to the victim by taking the allegations seriously, respecting the victim's privacy and, to the extent of its ability, assuring the victim's safety.

STEPS TAKEN BY THE SENIOR PASTOR/COUNCIL PRESIDENT AFTER A REPORT IS RECEIVED

1. The Senior Pastor (or Council President if the accused is the Senior Pastor) will suspend the service of the volunteer or staff person working with St. Barnabas Youth during the investigation. This suspension is to be done in accordance with church employment policies in the case of a paid staff person.
2. Pastoral support is to be offered to persons who need to be interviewed by DCFS or the Police.
3. The Senior Pastor or other staff will provide immediate and appropriate counseling to the victim, the perpetrator and the families affected, and will help connect the victim to certified counselors.
4. The Senior Pastor or other staff will support other victims as needed. These victims may include family members of the youth, peers of the youth, remaining volunteers, the congregation and family of the alleged abuser.

SYNOD ASSISTANCE

1. The Director for Communications from the Northern Illinois Synod Office will be asked to coordinate any necessary communication with the media.
2. Staff from the Northern Illinois Synod office will be asked to assist in the process of disclosure to the congregation and congregational recovery.