

**Pine Hill Fire**  
**Department/District #1**  
**Policy**  
**Protection and Safe**  
**Treatment of Minors**



# Policy - Protection and Safe Treatment of Minors

## Table of Contents

<b>Section I</b>	<b>Purpose and Scope</b>	<b>Pages 3-6</b>
<b>Section II</b>	<b>Definitions</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>Section III</b>	<b>Statement of Policy</b>	<b>Page 8</b>
<b>Section IV</b>	<b>Recruitment and Hiring of Employees and Vetting of Individuals Volunteering their Time</b>	<b>Pages 8-9</b>
<b>Section V</b>	<b>Procedures and Responsibilities of Officials</b>	<b>Pages 9-10</b>
<b>Section VI</b>	<b>Program Procedures</b>	<b>Pages 10-12</b>
<b>Section VII</b>	<b>Training Requirements</b>	<b>Pages 12-14</b>
<b>Section VIII</b>	<b>Reporting Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect</b>	<b>Page 13-14</b>
<b>Section IX</b>	<b>Important Information RE: Reporting Suspected Abuse Under NJ Law</b>	<b>Page 14</b>
<b>Section X</b>	<b>Acknowledgment and Receipt and Review of Policy</b>	<b>Pages 14-15</b>
<b>Appendix A</b>	<b>Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect</b>	<b>Pages 16-17</b>
<b>Appendix B</b>	<b>Recognizing "Grooming" Behavior</b>	<b>Page 18</b>
	<b>ADOPTION OF POLICY</b>	<b>Page 19</b>

## Protection and Safe Treatment of Minors

### **I. Purpose and Scope:**

Under New Jersey law (N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.21), an abused or neglected child is anyone "under the age of 18 who is caused harm by a parent, guardian or other person having custody or control of that minor." A child who is under the age of eighteen (18) is considered to be abused or neglected when a parent, caregiver, another child, or another adult does one or more of the following:

1. Inflicts or allows to be inflicted physical injury by other than accidental means that creates substantial harm or risk of substantial harm, and/or
2. Fails to provide proper supervision or adequate food, clothing, shelter, education, or medical care although financially able or assisted to do so, and/or
3. Commits or allows to be committed an act of sexual abuse against a child.

Child abuse can have long-term effects on victims. A lack of trust and difficulty with healthy relationships is common, as is a core feeling of worthlessness and low self-esteem. There may even be long-term trouble with regulating emotions that can lead to destructive behaviors.

There are typically four common types of abuse:

- The failure to meet a child's basic needs, physically or emotionally, which is called ***neglect***.
- The intentional use of physical force that results in injury, which is called ***physical abuse***.
- The practice of any behaviors that harm a child's feelings of self-worth or emotional well-being, which is ***emotional abuse***.
- Engaging in sexual acts with a child, including pornography, which is ***sexual abuse***.

Unfortunately, statistics reflect that abuse is all too common in any form.

- In New Jersey, abuse reports involving 80,000 children are filed each year. Fifty thousand of those children receive prevention and post-response services.
- 75% of the cases involve neglect, 18% of the cases involve physical abuse, and psychological abuse accounts for 7% of the cases.
- 55% of the perpetrators are female, while males account for 45%.
- Sadly, child abuse is a vicious cycle, in that 30% of abused children will later abuse their own children.

The statistics and characteristics pertaining to **sexual abuse** are sobering and equally as disheartening:

- ✓ **"Peer-to-Peer"** abuse is by far the most common, where one or more children or adolescent(s) sexually abuses or inappropriately touches another. Legally, the abuser must be at least four years older to trigger the statute. The *American Psychological Association* reports this type of abuse is driven by power and dominance, the same factors that drive bullying within this age group. In fact, bullying can be a precursor to sexual abuse, especially when there is a lack of supervision.
- ✓ In contrast, **"adult-to-child"** abuse is typically thought out and planned in advance, demanding access, privacy and control. These three factors demand a specific type of relationship and setting, meaning that 90% of juvenile sexual abuse victims know their abuser. The scope of the problem is massive: by the age of 18, 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys have experienced sexual abuse. From those figures, 88% of those molestations are attributed to individuals with pedophilia. ***Pedophilia is a psychotic disorder in which an adult or adolescent demonstrates a primary sexual attraction to prepubescent children.*** However, it is important not to confuse pedophilia with actual child molestation, as many pedophiles never act on their attractions.
- ✓ Child sexual abusers are not always easy to spot. Though seven out of every eight molesters are male, they match the general population in ethnicity, religion, education, and marital status. So there is no stereotype, especially since abusers go to great lengths to blend in. However, only 10% abuse children that they don't know, and 68% look no further than their own families for victims.
- ✓ 40% of abusers first begin molesting children before they themselves reach the age of 15, and the vast majority before the age of 20.
- ✓ Adolescent abusers generally begin their acts of abuse on younger siblings.
- ✓ Most sexual abuse occurs within the family. However, molesters can gain access to children outside of their own families through employment or volunteer work with an organization that works primarily with children. This allows them both time alone with potential victims and the ability to build trust and credibility. In fact, child abusers are often known and respected in their communities for their dedication to children.

- ✓ In terms of a victim profile, it is important to remember that, although there are characteristics that make some children more vulnerable, every child is in danger. Passive, lonely, or troubled children, especially those who live with step-parents or single parents, may be targeted. Children between the ages of 7 and 13 are most at risk, and children from low socioeconomic backgrounds or rural areas are more likely to be victimized.
- ✓ Molesters have behavioral patterns that can be identified as **"grooming"** their victims. Sexual abuse is rarely violent. The molester's goal is to solicit compliance by beginning to win the victim's trust. There might be pet names, gifts to foster exclusivity, and encouragement to "keep secrets." The molester might begin to spend time with the victim outside of the regular program or schedule, contacting parents to become involved in a child's life in some capacity, like babysitting. For this reason, many parents are shocked after abuse comes to light simply because the abuser seemed trustworthy. Inevitably, the favoritism is not enough to keep the victim silent anymore, and the abuser resorts to threats—threats that play off of a child's guilt over the sexual contact.
- ✓ During the grooming process and abuse, victims often begin to show signs such as sexual behaviors or strong sexual language that is too adult for their age. Many children feel at fault after the abuse and begin to suffer guilt and depression, even resorting to self-harm. They may begin to display cuts and scratches or other self-inflicted injuries. However, some children are naïve and unaware of the gravity of the abusive nature of their experience. Research shows that children often delay reporting sexual abuse. They should not be disbelieved just because they waited a long time to seek help.

In the State of New Jersey, every level of government has a role in protecting minors.

- At the State level:
  - State law is enforced through the N.J. Family Division of the State court system. The court has broad powers, including the ability to remove children from dangerous situations
  - The Department of Children and Families, specifically the Division of Child Protection and Permanency, combines all state operations intended to safeguard children into a single, coordinated program working closely with the Courts, legal advocates, and law enforcement.

- The Department of Corrections operates adult prisons and youth correctional centers to deal with perpetrators, while individual counties operate youth detention centers and special purpose schools.
- At the local level:
  - Municipalities and counties operate or sponsor a variety of programs that involve children, including but not limited to:
    - Recreation programs
    - Before and After Care programs
    - Youth sports leagues
    - Youth centers
    - Youth in Government programs
    - Junior law enforcement training programs

The **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** is committed to the safety of all individuals in its community. However, the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** has a particular concern for those who are potentially vulnerable, including minor children. The **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** regards the abuse of children as abhorrent in all its forms and pledges to hold its officials, employees, and volunteers to the highest standards of conduct in interacting with children. Statistics show that 93% of victims under the age of 18 know the abuser. Further, a perpetrator does not have to be an adult to harm a child but is typically in a caregiver role. They can have any relationship to the child, including a playmate, family member, a teacher, a coach, or instructor.

The **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** is fully committed to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of minors who interact with officials, employees, and volunteers of the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** to the maximum extent possible. These Policy and Procedures establish the guidelines for officials, employees, and volunteers who set policy for the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** or may work with or interact with individuals under 18 years of age, and those who supervise employees, and volunteers who may work with or interact with individuals under 18 years of age, with the goal of promoting the safety and wellbeing of minors.

This Policy provides guidelines that apply broadly to interactions between minors and officials, employees, and volunteers in programs operated by the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** or



affiliated programs or activities. All officials, employees, and volunteers are responsible for understanding and complying with this policy.

## II. Definitions:

- **Authorized Adult**- Individuals, age 18 and older, paid or unpaid, who interact with, supervise, chaperone, or otherwise oversee and/or interact with minors in program activities, recreational, and/or residential facilities. The Authorized Adults' roles may include positions as counselors, chaperones, coaches, instructors, etc.
- **Child or Minor** - A person under the age of eighteen (18).
- **Department Heads**- Appointed department heads of the (local unit type), including the chief administrative officer, and any assistants.
- **Direct Contact** - Positions with the possibility of care, supervision, guidance, or control of children or routine interaction with children.
- **Dual Reporting** - Reporting possible abuse to both the N.J. Department of Children and Families and law enforcement at the same time by the individual designated by the (local unit type) to report all possible cases of abuse.
- **Employees, Staff, or Counselors** - persons working for the (local unit type) on a full-time or part-time basis, and compensated by the (local unit type).
- **Facilities** - Facilities owned by, under the control of, or rented or leased to the (local unit type).
- **Grooming** - is when someone builds a relationship, trust, and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them. Refer to Appendix B for more detailed information on grooming.
- **N.J.M.E.L. JIF**-New Jersey Municipal Excess Liability Fund Joint Insurance fund
- **Officials** - Elected officials of the (local unit type), appointed Board members, and Authority Commissioners
- **One-On-One Contact** - Personal, unsupervised interaction between any Authorized Adult and a participant without at least one other Authorized Adult, parent, or legal guardian being present.

- **Programs** - Programs and activities offered or sponsored by the (local unit type).
- **Volunteers**-Individuals volunteering their time to provide services to the (local unit type) who are not on the payroll and receive no compensation.

### III. **Policy:**

The ***PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT*** is charged with protecting the health, safety, and welfare of all its citizens, including children under the age of 18. To that end, the ***PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT*** is firmly committed to protecting children under the care and supervision of the ***PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT*** from all forms of physical, mental, sexual, and emotional abuse. The ***PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT*** is committed to establishing and implementing safeguards to eliminate opportunities for abuse of children entrusted to the care of the ***PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT***. The procedures outlined below shall apply to all officials, employees, and volunteers of the ***PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT***.

### IV. **Recruitment and Hiring of Employees and Vetting of Individuals Volunteering Their Time:**

- i. All prospective employees and volunteers shall undergo a thorough and complete background check, including the following:

1. ***For full-time employees, including volunteers and commissioners, in supervisory positions involving minors:***

- a. National Database Criminal History Search
- b. National Sex Offender Search
- c. Social Security Trace/Validation
- d. Employment Verification
- e. Reference Check

***Written documentation of the background check shall be maintained by the PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT in perpetuity.***

- ii. Background checks that disclose any negative or questionable results must be reviewed and approved by the Fire Chief ***prior to*** the individual being hired and/or working with minors. **Provisional hiring should not be permitted.**



- iii. The Fire Chief or his designee shall annually re-check and document the Megan's Law directory for New Jersey to make certain that current employees are not listed.
- iv. Once employed, authorized adults who are employed are required to notify the Fire Chief of an arrest (charged with a misdemeanor or felony) or conviction for an offense within 72 hours of knowledge of the arrest or conviction in order to ascertain the fitness of those employees and volunteers to interact with children.

**V. Procedures and Responsibilities of Officials:**

**Under New Jersey Law, an official may be held liable for the abuse or neglect of a child if he or she fails to implement appropriate safeguards to protect the child while the minor has been entrusted to the care of the PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** Most importantly, recent changes in the law in New Jersey extended the statute of limitations for child abuse and neglect cases substantially, thus placing local officials and employees at a far greater risk.

A valid cause of action can be filed by an alleged victim well after the official has left office. It is, therefore, critically important for officials to establish and monitor policies and procedures designed to safeguard minors entrusted to the care of the PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT.

- Officials of the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** are required to :
  - i. Complete the initial training course adopted by the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT**, and any updated/refresher course, in order to better understand their legal duties and responsibilities under Federal and N.J. State Law. The training program will include the following concepts:
    - Recognizing the signs of abuse and neglect of minors.
    - Establishing guidelines for protecting minors from emotional and physical abuse and neglect.
    - Understanding and being prepared to implement the procedures necessary to eliminate opportunities for abuse.
    - Becoming familiar with the legal requirements to report suspected cases of abuse.
    - Fully understanding the legal consequences for not being diligent in making certain that employees of the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** adhere to all policies and procedures as adopted.

- ii. Meet **annually** with all Line Officers to review the "Policy Addressing Sexual Abuse of Minors", and to verify that the administration is adhering to this policy which includes all of the following provisions. *If the policy is not being adhered to, it is the legal obligation of the officials of the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** to implement whatever changes are necessary as soon as possible to make certain the policy is followed.*
- iii. The Chief or his designee will conduct **random and unannounced** visits to program sites to observe the setup of the programs and conduct of the employees and volunteers of the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT**.

## VI. Program Procedures:

All programs operated by, sponsored by, or affiliated with the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** shall comply with the following procedures. All officials, employees, and volunteers who interact with or could possibly interact with minors, and those employees who supervise employees who interact with or could potentially interact with minors, shall adhere to the following policy.

The following policies shall apply to **all programs** offered by, sponsored by, or affiliated with the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT**. As an essential element of compliance with the overall objective of protecting and addressing the safe treatment of minors, the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** shall:

- a. Establish a written procedure for the notification of the minor's parent/legal guardian in case of an emergency, including medical or behavioral problems, natural disasters, or other significant program disruptions. Authorized Adults with the program, as well as participants and their parents/legal guardians, must be advised of this procedure in writing prior to the participation of the minors in the program. In addition, **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** shall provide information to parents or legal guardians detailing the manner in which the participant can be contacted during the program.
- b. Make certain that all program participants provide a **Medical Treatment Authorization form** to the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT**.
- c. All volunteer and paid staff members, which will adhere to the following code of conduct:

## ***Code of Conduct***

- Staff members will, at all times, respect the rights of program participants and use positive techniques of guidance including positive reinforcement and encouragement.
- Staff members will portray a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity.
- Staff members shall not transport children in their own vehicles, unless written authorization from the child's parent or guardian has been received.
- Members of the staff shall not be alone with children they meet in the programs outside of the camp. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, and inviting children to their home.
- Staff members will appear neat, clean, and appropriately attired.
- Staff members will refrain from intimate displays of affection towards others in the presence of children, parents, and staff.
- Staff members are required to refrain from texting, and posting or checking any of the social media outlets while they are working or volunteering. The only exception is for texting for the purposes of communicating with another staff member or parent regarding a programmatic issue pertaining to a child.

### **In addition to the Code of Conduct, the following shall be a part of the specific program provisions:**

- The possession or use drugs, fireworks, guns, and other weapons is prohibited on fire department/district vehicles or property
- The **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT** shall set forth rules and procedures governing when and under what circumstances participants may leave the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT** property during the program.
- No violence, including sexual abuse or harassment, will be tolerated.
- Hazing of any kind is prohibited. Bullying, including verbal, physical, and cyberbullying is prohibited and will be addressed immediately.

- No theft of property will be tolerated.
- Misuse or damage of **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** property is prohibited. Charges will be assessed against those participants who are responsible for damage or misuse of property.
- The inappropriate use of cameras, imaging, and digital devices is prohibited, including the use of such devices in showers, restrooms, or other areas where privacy is expected by participants.
- UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE ANY IMAGES OF ANY CHILD TAKEN DURING ANY OF THE ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED OR SPONSORED BY THE **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** TO BE SHARED ON ANY SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM WITHOUT THE EXPRESSED WRITTEN CONSENT OF A PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN.
- If possible, the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** shall assign a staff member who is at least 21 years of age to be accessible to participants. Additional Authorized Adults will be assigned to ensure one-on-one contact with minors does not occur, and that appropriate levels of supervision are implemented.
- The Responsibilities of the counselors must include, at a minimum, informing program participants about safety and security procedures, rules established by the program, and behavioral expectations. Counselors are responsible for following and enforcing all of the rules and must be able to provide information included herein to program participants and be able to respond to emergencies.

## **VII. Training Requirements:**

Individual training courses have been designed for each of the following categories, and **all** officials, employees, and volunteers of the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** are required to complete training (and refresher course training) adopted by the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT**. ALL employees of the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** shall complete the training course whether they interact with children/minors or not. Although training records will be maintained, it is recommended that each **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** and individual trainees also keep copies of their own training records.

- a. **Elected Officials, Appointed Officials, Department Heads, and Supervisors:**

All elected officials, appointed officials, department heads, and supervisors shall complete the **initial virtual training course** offered by the NJMEL, "**PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM ABUSE**" and adopted by the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT**, and any updated/refresher course in order to better understand their legal duties and responsibilities under Federal and N.J. State Law. The course includes the following:

- Recognizing the signs of abuse and neglect of minors.
- Establishing guidelines for protecting minors from emotional and physical abuse and neglect.
- Understanding and being prepared to implement the procedures necessary to eliminate opportunities for abuse.
- Becoming familiar with the legal requirements to report suspected cases of abuse.
- Fully understanding the legal consequences for not being diligent in making certain that employees of the **PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT** adhere to all policies and procedures as adopted.

b. **Volunteers and Employees of the PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT**

All employees and volunteers (regardless of whether they will be working with children or not) shall complete training provided by the NJMEL in the form of the "**PROTECTING CHILDREN**" video on protecting children on the MEL website and found at:

<https://njmel.org/mel-safety-institute/model-policies/protecting-children-videos/>

i. Course Content shall include:

1. Current State NJ State Law pertaining to Sexual Abuse of Minors
2. Recognizing the signs of abuse and neglect
3. Different types of abuse (i.e., Peer to Peer, Adult to Child, etc...)
4. Your legal responsibility for implementing and monitoring procedures and employees
5. Reporting cases of abuse

**VIII. Reporting Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect:**

In light of the importance and priority placed on safeguarding the health and safety of minors, it is critically important that suspected cases of child abuse



and neglect are reported as soon as possible to the local police department. **As a government official, employee or volunteer, you are legally required to report suspected child abuse. This requirement includes all governmental officials, employees and volunteers.**

Child Abuse is a hard thing to talk about, especially with victims. The most important thing to remember is to **show calm reassurance and unconditional support.** Avoid interrogation and leading questions. Understand that denial and embarrassment are common reactions. Don't display disbelief, shock, or disgust. Instead, be reassuring. Make sure the child knows that they did nothing wrong. Reassure them that this is not their fault and make sure they know that you take it seriously.

Interviewing children to investigate sexual abuse requires highly technical expertise. **Do not "investigate" an abuse situation. Do not interrogate the child.** The investigation will be undertaken by those who are trained to undertake that critical task. Instead report it immediately, as shown below. And finally, keep safety as the priority. If there is the possibility of violence against yourself or the child, get the appropriate professionals or agencies involved as soon as possible, and report the abuse to local law enforcement.

#### **IX. Important Information Regarding Reporting Suspected Abuse Under NJ Law:**

**The following guidelines have been established under New Jersey law, for those reporting suspected or alleged cases of abuse or neglect. The PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT encourages all officials, employees, and volunteers in programs operated by the PINE HILL FIRE DEPARTMENT/DISTRICT or affiliated programs or activities to report suspected cases of abuse with the following in mind.**

- i. Any person who, in good faith, makes a report of child abuse or neglect or testifies in a child abuse hearing resulting from such a report is immune from any criminal or civil liability as a result of such action. Calls can be placed anonymously to the hotline established by the N.J. Department of Children and Families at 1-877-652-2873.*
- ii. However, any person who knowingly fails to report suspected abuse or neglect according to the law or to comply with the provisions is a disorderly person.*

#### **X. Acknowledgment of Receipt and Review of Policy:**

All officials, employees/counselors, and volunteers shall sign and date an acknowledgment form that confirms they have received and reviewed the



Policy Addressing the Protection and Safe Treatment of Minors, emailed to them by the **Fire Chief or his designee**. The same process shall be used for any revised policy issued in the future.

## Appendix A: Indicators of Child Abuse/Neglect

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families issued the following guidelines to assist in recognizing the indicators of child abuse/neglect.

### **Indicators of Child Abuse / Neglect**

Different types of abuse and neglect have different physical and behavioral indicators.

#### Physical Abuse

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioral Indicators</b>
<p>Unexplained bruises and welts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On face, lips, mouth</li> <li>• On torso, back, buttocks, thighs</li> <li>• In various stages of healing</li> <li>• Cluster, forming regular patterns</li> <li>• Reflecting shape of article used to inflict (electric cord, belt buckle)</li> <li>• On several different surface areas</li> <li>• Regularly appear after absence, weekend or vacation</li> </ul> <p>Unexplained burns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cigar, cigarette burns, especially on soles, palms, back or buttocks</li> <li>• Immersion burns (sock-like, glove-like doughnut shaped on buttocks or genitalia)</li> <li>• Patterned like electric burner, iron, etc.</li> <li>• Rope burns on arms, legs, neck or torso</li> </ul> <p>Unexplained fractures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To skull, nose, facial structure</li> <li>• In various stages of healing</li> <li>• Multiple or spiral fractures</li> </ul> <p>Unexplained laceration or abrasions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To mouth, lips, gums, eyes</li> <li>• To external genitalia</li> </ul>	<p>Wary of adult contacts Apprehensive when other children cry Behavioral extremes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aggressiveness</li> <li>• Withdrawal</li> </ul> <p>Frightened of parents Afraid to go home Reports injury by parents</p>

## Physical Neglect

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioral Indicators</b>
Consistent hunger, poor hygiene, inappropriate dress Consistent lack of supervision, especially in dangerous activities or long periods Constant fatigue or listlessness Unattended physical problems or medical needs Abandonment	Begging, stealing food Extended stays at school (early arrival and late departure) Constantly falling asleep in class Alcohol or drug abuse Delinquency (e.g. thefts) States there is no caregiver

## Sexual Abuse

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioral Indicators</b>
Difficulty in walking or sitting Torn, stained or bloody underclothing Pain or itching in genital area Bruises or bleeding in external genitalia, vaginal or anal areas Venereal disease, especially in pre-teens Pregnancy	Unwilling to change for gym or participate in P.E. Withdrawn, fantasy or infantile behavior Bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual behavior or knowledge Poor peer relationships Delinquent or run away Reports sexual assault by caregiver

## Emotional Maltreatment

<b>Physical Indicators</b>	<b>Behavioral Indicators</b>
Habit disorders (sucking, biting, rocking, etc.) Conduct disorders (antisocial, destructive, etc.) Neurotic traits (sleep disorders, speech disorders, inhibition of play)	Behavior extremes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliant, passive</li> <li>• Aggressive, demanding</li> </ul> Overly adoptive behavior: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inappropriately adult</li> <li>• Inappropriately infant</li> </ul>

## Appendix B – Grooming Behavior

Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust, and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them.

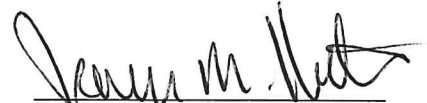
Here are some common characteristics of someone attempting to "groom" a child.

- Molesters often refer to their intended victims by pet names and use gifts to foster exclusivity and build a relationship while starting the practice of keeping secrets.
- The molester might begin to spend time with the victim outside of the regular program or schedule, contacting parents to become involved in a child's life in some capacity, like babysitting. For this reason, many parents are shocked after abuse comes to light simply because the abuser seemed so good – too good to be true, in fact.
- Inevitably, the favoritism is not enough to keep the victim, and the abuser resorts to threats—threats that play off of a child's guilt over the sexual contact.
- During the grooming process and abuse itself, victims often begin to show tell-tale signs, including:
  - Sexual behaviors or strong sexual language that is too adult for their age.
  - Many children feel at fault after the abuse and begin to suffer guilt and depression, even resorting to self-harm.
  - Also, look for cuts and scratches or other self-inflicted injuries.

## Adoption

This policy was adopted by the Board of Fire Commissioners at the meeting held on July 7, 2022. The effective date is August 1, 2022 to allow time for distribution and reading of the policy.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kevin Waddington, Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph M. Hunter, Chief