

Child Protection Standards

in church „Chrystus Królem” - Kościół w Krakowie, Zbór Kościoła Bożego w Chrystusie

The guiding principle of all activities undertaken by people caring for children in the church „Chrystus Królem” - Kościół w Krakowie, Zbór Kościoła Bożego w Chrystusie is to act for the good of the child and in its best interest and to model the attitude of Christ (Mark 10:13-16). Everyone involved in children's ministry treats the child with respect and considers the child's needs. It is unacceptable for anyone to use any form of violence against a child.

People involved in serving children and all church employees and leaders, in pursuing these goals, operate within the framework of applicable law, internal regulations of our church and their own competences. These Standards do not violate the God-given authority of parents and are intended to strengthen cooperation with parents and their sense of security when they entrust their children to the church for classes.

I. Introduction, definition of terms.

For the purposes of this document, the following terms are used:

a. SODz – this document describing the Child Protection Standards in the church „Chrystus Królem” - Kościół w Krakowie, Zbór Kościoła Bożego w Chrystusie

b. Child – any person under 18 years of age. taking part in organized activities conducted by our church.

c. Pastor – The person in charge in the church „Chrystus Królem” - Kościół w Krakowie, Zbór Kościoła Bożego w Chrystusie

i.e. Tomasz Chudy

d. Coordinator – children's ministry leader or other person designated by the pastor to apply the SOD in the church.

The coordinator at Kościół Chrystus Królem w Krakowie church is Agnieszka Pohorniev.

e. Employee – any adult person who takes care of children in the church „Chrystus Królem” - Kościół w Krakowie, Zbór Kościoła Bożego w Chrystusie during activities organized by the church. Both employees under employment contracts, clergy and volunteers.

f. Register - Register of Sexual Offenders.

g. Court – District Court, Family and Juvenile Department, which for the church is „Chrystus Królem” - Kościół w Krakowie, Zbór Kościoła Bożego w Chrystusie court III rd Family and Juvenile Department of the District Court for Kraków - Śródmieście in Krakow at ul. Przy Rondzie 7, 31 - 547 Krakow.

h. Child abuse should be understood as committing a prohibited or punishable act to the detriment of the child by any person, including a church employee, or threatening the child's well-being, including neglect.

II. Code of safe staff-child relations

1. **Permitted** behavior towards children is physical contact in the form of patting the shoulder, stroking the head, hugging the upper part of the body, taking a child from the kindergarten group and grades 1-3 of primary school on one's lap, reacting with a firm, calm tone of voice to the child's dangerous behavior or violating the rules of group work.
2. Any permitted action should be immediately **interrupted and refrained** from in the future, towards a child who verbally and/or non-verbally signals that he or she does not accept such behavior (e.g. the chosen form of greeting or caressing).
3. Behavior towards children includes shouting, epithets, sarcasm, remarks about the child or its parents that the child perceives as offensive, and all forms of physical violence (use of force), such as hitting, forcibly pulling the hand or other parts of the body.
4. **The exception** to the prohibition of using violence is an event when a child harms himself. In such a case, in order to prevent the child's self-destructive actions, the employee holds the child so that the child's back touches the child's chest and blocks the

child's arms with his or her hands. The employee remains in this position with the child until he or she calms down, all the while speaking gently to the child and reassuring him or her.

5. All children, regardless of social status, ethnic or national origin, disability or special educational needs, are treated in the church with the same respect and care and are subject to the same standards of protection.
6. In the case of **borderline situations**, such as using the toilet, the guardian assists the child and his help is limited only to the activities requested by the child or if the child has difficulties, e.g. with getting dressed. The employee speaks loudly to the child about how he or she intends to help and waits for the child's acceptance. The employee does not perform any activities that he or she has not previously informed the child about and obtained his or her consent.
7. If a child's behavior **violates the rules** established during classes, the employee informs the child about breaking the rules and the resulting consequences. Established rules:
 1. If a child makes it difficult to conduct classes, the teacher talks to him or her about his or her behavior after the class.
 2. If the behavior does not change during subsequent classes, the child's parent is included in the conversation.
 3. If, despite these conversations, there is no improvement in the child's behavior, he or she may participate in classes in the presence of a parent.
 4. The child cannot participate in classes if previous steps do not bring improvement and the child continues to disrupt the class schedule. If a child does not follow these rules, the employee takes the child to the parent.
8. Direct contacts between a child and an employee **outside classes organized by the church** are allowed only in the presence and with the consent of the child's parents.
9. Each **online** message, regardless of the medium (e.g. text message, e-mail, social media), should be sent by the employee to the child only after obtaining the parents' prior consent to such online message exchange.
10. If using **private transport**, the car/bus driver must have written permission from the child's parents or guardians to transport the child. The authorization must indicate the date, starting point, ending point and destination. The person responsible for organizing the trip (transport) may also have a collective list of both drivers and permissions from parents.
11. In the case of an overnight stay, it is strictly forbidden for an employee and one child to stay overnight in the same room, even with the consent of the parent or guardian. An employee and a group of children may stay overnight in a common room in the case of children under 8 years of age.

12. If an adult is invited to classes as a guest (a missionary, a parent of one of the children, another person who is not an employee), such a person cannot be alone during classes with children. During classes with a guest, the responsible employee is present at all times. for the group.
13. Anyone who **notifies** questionable or unacceptable behavior in the employee-child relationship should immediately contact the coordinator. If possible, the situation with the child should be clarified immediately in the presence of the parent, the reporting person and the coordinator.

If it is not possible to clarify the situation immediately, the coordinator will clarify the situation within the next 14 days.

The reporting person and the coordinator immediately prepare a **note** about the disturbing behavior and the course of the conversation with the child and parent. The note is attached to the SODz documentation. The note must include: the date, the child's name and surname, the names and surnames of the adults involved in the disturbing behavior, a description of the behavior, a description of the actions taken and the effects of these actions.

The coordinator conducts an explanatory interview with the employee concerned and prepares a note for the SODz documentation.

If the report concerns the coordinator, the procedure is carried out by the pastor.

III. Staff verification rules:

1. Pastor Tomasz Chudy checks the candidate in the register.
2. The candidate presents a certificate of no criminal record, citizenship and a declaration of the country of residence for the last 20 years up to the year of employment.
3. Pastor Tomasz Chudy can search the Internet for open and available information about the candidate and his/her social profiles and verify the information provided by the candidate with that published on the Internet.

4. As part of the verification of the application of SODz standards, pastor Tomasz Chudy should re-check the register for all employees every 2 years.

5. A minor may help in conducting activities with children as a support for an adult employee. She cannot conduct classes on her own or take care of children on her own. Before starting cooperation, a minor must participate in training on standards.

IV. Code of safe child-child relationships

1. **Acceptable** behaviors in child-child relationships are all behaviors that the employee taking care of the group considers safe and are accepted by all children in the group. If one of the children in the group verbally or non-verbally signals discomfort or opposition to the behavior or words of another child, we consider such behavior to be unacceptable during meetings of this group of children.

2. **Prohibited** behavior includes all forms of physical and verbal violence, putting pressure on one child by another, encouraging breaking group rules, insulting or malicious comments from one child about another.

3. In the event of prohibited behavior, the employee interrupts the classes, communicates the violation of group rules, talks to the child and encourages him or her to change his or her attitude. If there is no improvement in the child's behavior, he or she is taken to the parent.

V. Intervention procedure and responsible persons.

It is not the church's responsibility to collect evidence that child abuse occurred in a particular situation. This is the task of the bodies appointed for this purpose (police, prosecutor's office), which are obliged to investigate a given case as a result of the notification received.

Intervention measures should be taken when suspected. The matter is being investigated by the relevant services and authorities. Thanks to the intervention, people harming children will be stopped and the violence will not escalate.

1. It is necessary to report a given case via the internal procedure when:

- An employee suspects that a child is being abused.
- The child revealed that he or she was experiencing abuse.

- Suspicion of child abuse or abuse by an employee has been reported.
- Suspected child abuse by another child has been reported.

2. In the event of improper treatment of a child in our church by employees or other adults:

2.1. If we suspect the use of physical force, violence resulting in damage to health or sexual violence and the life or health of the child is at risk:

- We ensure your child's safety by appointing a guardian and a quiet place.
- We notify the pastor Tomasz Chudy and the child's parents, even if the suspicion concerns the family situation.
- We ensure the safety of other children by appointing another person to look after a group of children.
- Pastor Tomasz Chudy makes a note and notifies the appropriate services via emergency numbers 997 or 112.

2.2. If the action is one-time (verbal humiliation, epithets, shouting, etc.):

- Coordinator Agnieszka Pohorniev has a discipline conversation with an employee. Prepares a note and attaches it to the SODz documentation.
- If the incident repeats itself a second time, the pastor, on his own or at the request of the leader of the children's ministry, terminates cooperation with the employee and notifies parents about this fact (he does not make the reasons public).

3. If you become aware of domestic violence:

3.1. Pastor Tomasz Chudy carries out an internal intervention in the form of an encouraging and supportive conversation for the parent. The purpose of this conversation is to explain the situation and show the parent correct, non-violent ways to deal with the problem in the relationship with the child. A note is prepared from the conversation and attached to the SODz documentation.

3.2. In the event of repeated incidents and ineffectiveness of internal intervention, pastor Tomasz Chudy informs the appropriate services (police/ social welfare center/court) in writing. The letter includes a request to be included in the court's working group so that the church can participate in identifying the problem and providing support to the family or child.

4. If you find out about peer violence.

Peer violence affects people under 17 years of age.

4.1. Pastor Tomasz Chudy carries out an internal intervention in the form of an explanatory conversation with the children. The purpose of this conversation is to explain the situation and show a child who has hurt another child correct, non-violent ways to solve the problem. A note is prepared from the conversation and attached to the SODz documentation.

4.2. In the event of repeated incidents in which the perpetrator of harm is the same child, the pastor Tomasz Chudy notifies the parents and asks for their cooperation in solving the problem. In the case of a child who is over 10 years of age informs parents about the possibility of notifying the court.

5. The person responsible for receiving reports of suspected child abuse is pastor Tomasz Chudy.

The person responsible for providing support to the child until the parent calls is the employee conducting classes with children.

While support is provided, the care of the remaining children in the group is taken over by the coordinator or another employee available at the church.

The person responsible for submitting notifications to the police/health service/ social welfare center/court is pastor Tomasz Chudy.

VI. Documenting incidents and reports

Documents regarding all matters related to the SODz are stored in the church office at ul. Kamienna 43, 31-403 in Krakow in a way that gives access to them only to authorized persons: the pastor, the council of elders, the coordinator.

Documentation includes:

- a) Certificates and declarations submitted by candidates.
- b) Notes from incidents, conversations with children, conversations with parents and other adults, conversations with employees.
- c) Copies of letters and notifications sent to relevant services and state bodies.
- d) Dates and brief description of training provided to employees.
- e) Dates and description of the evaluation of the standards and changes introduced on the basis of the evaluation.

VII. Rules for safe Internet access

1. While children are on the church premises, they may have their own electronic devices (e.g. smartphone, watch, tablet). The basic principle in our church is that during classes we build relationships, learn group cooperation and respect for each person, so there is no need to use these devices. If an activity is planned during the classes that requires the use of e.g. a smartphone by children, the use of these devices is decided by the employee conducting the classes and applies only to this planned activity.

2. The WiFi network provided in the church is open. The parent or guardian decides on the content a child has access to. However, every person staying in church, if they notice that a child has harmful or threatening content on their smartphone or tablet, should notify the child's parent as soon as possible, and if they do not know the child, then an employee or coordinator who will notify the parent.

3. All children participating in church life are encouraged, both by parents and employees, to establish personal relationships with peers, play games and have fun together that build positive mutual relationships.

VIII. Protection of children's image and personal data.

1. Recording the child's image (filming, photographing, recording the child's voice) during classes conducted by the church is allowed on the same terms as for all other activities in the church, which are regulated by the church's GDPR procedures.

IX. The situation of children with special needs.

1. A parent or guardian registering a child for church activities must indicate on the consent form if their child requires special needs.

2. The person reporting the child's special needs is contacted by the coordinator or the person responsible for the activities (e.g. overnight stays or summer camps) and discusses the child's needs in detail, and then provides guidelines to employees. The entire procedure is not discussed publicly, and no observations or comments regarding the child's needs may be directed publicly to the child or to third parties.

X. Evaluation of standards

Every two years, these standards are evaluated and adapted to the current needs of minors and the church, as well as taking into account new social situations emerging in the church.

Additionally, evaluation of standards takes place each time a new church activity involving children's ministry is planned.

Evaluation meetings are initiated by pastor Tomasz Chudy. Children's service workers participate in the meetings.

As part of a review of standards compliance, the pastor or responsible person should re-check the sex offender registry for all currently employed staff.

XI. Staff education, person responsible for the process and documentation of the educational process.

1. Training in the standards adopted by the church is provided to all current and newly hired employees and underage helpers. The training takes place within 30 days after the standards are introduced or within 7 days after hiring a new employee or assistant.

2. Additional training in which all employees participate:

- Training in recognizing violence.
- Training in the principles of interventions

FDDS webinar: <https://youtu.be/J1jGYj6QqX8?si=-1-mRjL4yQOP3dWd> supplemented with information about the relevant procedures of the church SODz.

3. Pastor Tomasz Chudy is responsible for the staff education process and its documentation.

XII. Informing parents and children about standards

1. The full content of these standards is available to everyone in the form of a PDF file on the church's website and is sent by e-mail to every parent or guardian who registers a child for classes conducted by the church.
2. A shortened version of the standards, adapted to the children's developmental stage, is placed in each room where classes are conducted with children. This version is discussed with children every year, at the first class of the season or before the start of other activities for children, such as sleepovers or summer camps.