



**Beth El**  
Synagogue Center

**Safeguarding Our Youth:**  
**A Child Protection Policy**

*The safety and well-being of our children is sacred.*

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## Child Protection - Values Statement

Beth El Synagogue Center (“Beth El”) is a community that holds the safety and well-being of our children as sacred. This policy applies to all members of the congregation and community - including all staff members, congregants, volunteers and guests.

Beth El aims to provide children with a positive and enriching Jewish, educational, spiritual, social and cultural environment that promotes their intellectual, moral and emotional growth. Beth El is deeply committed to safeguarding the young people in our community so they feel and are safe at all times. Beth El strives for the highest standards towards protecting them from abuse. With that goal in mind, and through a process of reflection and study that took place over the course of 2022, with the guidance and support of the Aleinu Campaign, a project of Sacred Spaces, we have created *Safeguarding Our Children*, A Child Protection Policy.

This policy is meant to be a fluid and evolving document. As time passes, and we learn from our collective experiences and the practical nature of the policy’s implementation, its parameters may need to be altered - such change is a healthy process that will enable those charged with safeguarding our children to be responsive to altered circumstances and the practical needs of our community. The most updated version of this policy will always be available on our website.

All members of the Beth El community are required to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with being a positive role model (*Dugma Ishit*) for children and other adults and to follow this policy.

## Definitions

For the purpose of this policy:

**Bullying** is the repeated or targeted mistreatment of others that includes one or more of the following:

- Physical intimidation, such as invading someone's space or standing over someone.
- Psychological or emotional abuse, such as humiliating, controlling, isolating, frightening, or gaslighting.
- Written or electronic abuse (e.g., social media or cyber bullying).
- Undermining or intentionally interfering with someone's work, leadership efforts, or participation in programs or services.

**Child** refers to any individual under the age of 18 years.

**Community Member** refers to Beth El congregants, clergy, staff, volunteers, guests, visitors and contractors.

**Emotional Abuse** is defined as acts toward a child that cause or have a substantial likelihood of causing harm to the child's physical, psychological, social, spiritual, or moral development. Emotional abuse might include, but is not limited to patterns of: restricting a child's movement, discriminating, blaming, belittling, denigrating, threatening, scaring, ridiculing, or other non-physical forms of hostility or bullying.

**Grooming** is when a person may use seemingly innocent behaviors to gain the trust of a child, establish a relationship with a child, the child's family, or the community, for the purposes of his/her own sexual gratification. Such behaviors may include but are not limited to - the giving of preferential gifts to a child, asking a child to keep a secret, seeking the attention of a child, spending an increasing amount of time with a child, being overly physical with a child, inappropriate interactions with a child in person or via electronic devices or social media, the testing or ignoring of professional boundaries or rules.

**Neglect** is the failure of a person responsible for the care of a youth to provide for a child's basic needs or to protect from physical or psychological harm to the degree that the child's health, safety, or well-being are threatened.

**Physical Abuse** occurs when an adult or person in power inflicts non-accidental physical force that has a substantial risk of causing, or does cause, bodily injury or emotional trauma. Physical force between minor children can also be abusive depending on the circumstances. Beth El does not permit staff or volunteers to physically punish children.

**Sexual Abuse** is any occurrence in which an adult or person in power engages a

minor in sexual activity whether or not there is direct contact. The following are some examples of behavior that would be considered sexual activity:

*Physical Contact:*

- kissing
- fondling
- masturbation
- oral sex
- penetration of the vagina, anus, or other orifice by a penis, finger or other object or body part
- Other sexual contact, such as stroking or massaging a child's thigh

*Non-physical Contact*

- Sexualized communication (whether verbal or written, including by telephone, text message, email or social media)
- Voyeurism (spying on private or intimate behaviors, such as those involving undressing, nudity, bathroom activity)
- Exposing a child to pornography or other sexually explicit material
- Exposing part or all of an adult or child's naked body (except as necessary for caregiving or medical purposes)
- Sexually exploiting a child for financial gain, trafficking, or creating or distributing child sexual abuse images. Any activity intended to abuse, degrade, arouse, or gratify the adult's sexual desire

Sexual activity between children can also be abusive; some indicators might include a significant disparity in age, development, or size; if one child is in a position of responsibility, trust or power over the other; if one child is unconscious; or anytime coercion is used.

## **Volunteers**

- A regular volunteer is an individual who routinely works with children at known and expected intervals.
- An intermittent volunteer is an individual who intermittently, and without a set schedule, works with the child

## **Scope of Policy**

This policy applies to all activities on-site and/or under the auspices/sponsorship of Beth El Child Safety Committee.

## Child Safety Committee

In keeping with Beth El's commitment to protecting children from abuse, a standing Child Safety Committee has been established to oversee the development, implementation, and monitoring of ongoing youth safeguarding efforts at Beth El. The guidelines included in this policy, along with educational training for the entire staff and congregation, are at the core of our child protection program.

Committee members shall be individuals possessing maturity of judgment, deep integrity, compassion, sensitivity, respect of the congregation, and the ability to work well with others and in sensitive situations. The Committee shall be composed of mental health professionals, educators, synagogue staff, health professionals, and/or other members of synagogue leadership that the committee feels would make a valuable contribution to our work. A particular emphasis will be placed on selecting individuals with experience in responding to incidents involving child abuse.

We understand that highly sensitive information may be shared with members of this committee and all members of the committee are bound to respect the privacy of these matters and will not share information with those outside of the committee, aside from expert consultants and legal authorities when the situation requires. Discussions by the committee about specific child protection concerns should be, whenever possible, name/identity blind. Committee members must recuse themselves from conversations relating to family members or others where there may be a conflict of interest. Committee members agree to follow the protocols as outlined in this policy for preventing and responding to child abuse.

The Child Safety Committee's role is to coordinate and oversee:

- implementation of and ongoing maintenance of this policy
- development of clear protocols for reducing the risk of, and responding to child maltreatment
- educational forums and trainings
- advisement to the congregation on questions of child protection

The President of Beth El will designate a Chairperson of the Committee in consultation with the Senior Rabbi and Executive Director. The Chairperson, in consultation with the President, will appoint Committee members as necessary. The Committee shall consist of at least three and no more than five members, of which at least one shall be a member of the Board of Trustees.

The Child Safety Committee shall meet at minimum two times each year. These meetings serve many functions, including maintenance and annual review of this policy. Additional meetings will be held as necessary to address child protection concerns that arise.

All Committee members are required to have child protection training beyond the highest standards noted for other members of the community, as set forth in the Training Chart below (see Section 4: Training) and are required to enhance their knowledge and training annually.

## Communication with the Committee

The Beth El Child Safety Committee welcomes questions, concerns, and input about child safety at Beth El and the terms of this policy. The Committee can be reached by:

- Emailing [childsafety@bethelnr.org](mailto:childsafety@bethelnr.org) . Emails sent to this address are automatically forwarded to all members of the Committee to ensure that emails are not overlooked. The Chair of the Committee will acknowledge receipt of an email within 24 hours; if the Chair is unavailable, another committee member will acknowledge receipt. The sender will be updated weekly until the Committee has determined the issue to be resolved and communicated this to the individual.
- Beth El members are also welcome to approach or contact individual members of the Child Protection Committee or Beth El staff directly.
- The names of the Committee members are listed on the Beth El website.

## Code of Conduct for Interactions with Children

### Identifying and minimizing risk

Beth El will provide practical guidance and/or training to all members of the Beth El Community (including staff, volunteers, congregants) about permissible and prohibited behavior with children in order to minimize the risk of child abuse occurring within the community.

### Conduct and Behavior

Whenever possible, verbal instructions and directions should replace physical contact.

### Physical Contact

It is imperative that when adults interact with youth, whether in person or online, that their interactions are both **observable and interruptible**. If the interactions are not in a place that is observable and interruptible, there must be more than one adult present when with a child.

This policy does not ban all physical contact between adults and children, but rather limits such contact to the parameters listed below.

### Appropriate Touch

The type of allowable physical touch between an adult and youth varies depending upon the age of the child, the context of the interaction, and the child's developmental level.

These touches should be observable and interruptible or with more than one adult present when it is not possible to be in a location that is observable and interruptible.

Forms of appropriate touch include: a hand shake, a fist bump or high five.

A child's development and age must be considered when determining what contact, if any, is appropriate. Outlined below are forms of touch which are appropriate when **interacting with children age five and under**.

- Picking up or carrying (ie: into the car seat, after an injury on the playground, a child seeking comfort due to separation)
- Sitting on an adult's lap
- Assistance with changing clothing
- Hugging
- Changing diapers
- Assisting with toileting
  - It is advisable to avoid touching and direct the child using verbal cues, whenever possible
  - Ensure that the main door to the bathroom remains open

***For children over the age of five and/or for youth that are developmentally delayed,*** there is potential for situations to occur where touches would be required that are generally not allowable. While we cannot foresee every situation, below are guidelines that should be followed:

- If an emergency situation arises where a staff member/volunteer/community member deems it necessary to engage in touch that would usually be deemed inappropriate (ie: pick up or carry a child), the adult must notify their supervisor, document in notes, and tell the parent as soon as possible after the incident.
- If a child over the age of five hugs an adult, the best method to follow is “catch and release,” whereby the child initiates the hug, the adult catches them very lightly and then immediately releases.
- If a staff member/volunteer/community member must go into the restroom to check on a child, they should seek out another adult to accompany them. If another adult is not available to accompany, then they should go to the exterior bathroom door, knock, and ask if the child needs assistance. If the child requires assistance, the staff/volunteer/community member should leave the exterior bathroom door open when entering the bathroom area and try to verbally assist the child, while the child remains behind the door of the bathroom stall. Any assistance with the straightening or fastening of garments should be done in the presence of another adult.

### **Prohibited Physical Contact**

Under no circumstances should a Beth El staff/volunteer/community member have physical contact with a child that could be considered or result in sexual or physical abuse as defined in this policy.

Example of inappropriate touch:

- Touching of genitals, breasts, thighs or buttocks (the touching of body parts that would normally be covered by a bathing suit);

- Touch that is intended to cause pain or distress to the child, including physical punishment;
- Touch that is overly physical and may include roughhousing, tickling, or wrestling;
- Lap sitting of a child over the age of five.

If a child attempts to touch an adult in an inappropriate manner, such as reaching out to an intimate part of the adult's body, the adult should gently prevent physical contact and redirect the child. Adults should discourage children from inappropriate expectations of touch in a gentle manner, being mindful to not embarrass the child.

Adults should carefully set limits when children seek excessive, inappropriate, or sexual attention and obtain support services for children who continually struggle with these limits. Additionally, adults should be mindful of the child's behavior and actions, taking notice of behaviors that may be suggestive of past abuse, as communicated during training. Such behaviors should be communicated to the appropriate supervisor as soon as possible.

## Interactions with Youth: Observable and Interruptible

All interactions with youth, including both instructional and non-instructional interactions, are to take place in spaces that are both **observable and interruptible**.

In this section, we will cover interactions that are in person as well as those that are virtual.

For in-person meetings, "observable and interruptible" includes but is not limited to classrooms and/or spaces with windows and unlocked doors and reported as being used for instructional purposes (taking place at a time and in a space known and designated for instructional use). In-person meetings can only take place if others are also in the building or meeting location.

For virtual interactions with youth at Beth EI (both instructional and non-instructional interactions), the following guidelines must be followed:

- Whenever feasible, Zoom meetings and classes should be hosted on the Beth EI account and not a personal account.
- Zoom links for online sessions should be shared with students and their parents/guardians.
- Zoom sessions should never be saved/recorded on personal accounts.
- Peer-to-peer chat functionality can be enabled or disabled by teachers/staff. It is recommended that instructors guide students about the appropriate use of the chat function, focusing specifically on the importance of respectful

communication and interactions.

- Only tabs used for the current lesson plan should be visible during the session. Adults should always be mindful of what is visible when sharing their screen, ensuring that all items that are visible or potentially visible are appropriate for children.

The following guidelines apply in all instances of 1:1 interactions with youth at Beth El, whether in person or virtually:

- 1:1 interactions should be scheduled on the calendar of the 1:1 instructor and whenever possible shared with the appropriate supervisor's calendar or Beth El master calendar.
- 1:1 sessions with children should be planned in advance. One-on-one meetings in particular should not be spontaneously scheduled or rescheduled. Spontaneity reduces the likelihood that the meetings can be observed.

For In-Person 1:1 Meetings, these additional guidelines must be followed:

- The room door should be open or with an unobstructed window view with clear visibility into the room. The door should be unlocked and the adult should not physically be between the child and the room exit.
- 1:1 instruction must be scheduled at times when additional staff and/or adults are present in the Beth El building.

For Virtual 1:1 Meetings, we recommend the following best practices:

- As with in-person interactions, we recommend that a parent or other adult be present (within sight and hearing of the instruction) at the time of a student's class or lesson.
- We recommend that observability and interruptibility be guidelines for families to use within their homes as well. Thus, we suggest that doors remain open when children are attending online lessons/meetings and/or that online sessions be held in common areas of the home.

## Acceptable Boundaries

People who intend to inflict harm on children are known to engage in grooming behavior, such as giving compliments, gifts or affection. Beth El staff members/volunteers/congregants should refrain from showing favoritism to children whom they supervise or interact with. This may include but is not limited to:

- Gift giving that is specific to an individual child. This does not include, for example, an appropriate Bar/Bat Mitzvah or other special gift from the institution.

- Meeting or contacting children alone (not observable and interruptible) or without the knowledge or permission of their parent/guardian.

## Language and Communication

Words, what we say, and how we communicate with others can be nurturing and supportive. Language and communication can also be destructive and hurtful. All members of the community should be careful and cognizant of the language and tone that is used at all times, and especially when we speak to and/or are in the presence of children.

All Beth El community members, staff, and volunteers must refrain from making any sexually suggestive comments or perceived jokes, innuendos, behavior, or using inappropriate language. In addition:

- Adults may not use language that teases, belittles or shames a child.
- Adults should never ask a child to keep a secret.
- Adults should never share with children explicit sexual material including; pornography, photos, videos or other explicit media.
- Inappropriate language/conversation may include, but is not limited to:
  - Cursing
  - Using lewd or sexually suggestive language
  - Comments about the way a child looks, is dressed, or about their body
  - Questions about a child's sexuality or gender
  - Information about an adult's intimate behaviors, relationships, desires, or body
  - Questions/conversations about a child's intimate behaviors, relationships, or desires (ie: adult asking a teen who they are interested in dating)

*In addition, the following guidelines apply to staff and volunteers:*

- Personal contact (*home address, personal email addresses, personal home/cell phone numbers*) information should not be shared with a child.
- In the event that a staff member or volunteer is required to communicate with a child via email, text message, or social media, an additional staff member or parent/guardian must be copied on the communication unless explicit permission is granted by the parent/guardian for such communication to occur without another adult being copied.
- We understand that personal cell phones are now commonly used for both business and personal purposes and in certain situations, especially with regard to teen programming, text messages are shared from personal cell phones between teens and staff. Therefore, with parent/guardian permission, texting with teens from a staff member's personal cell phone is permissible. However, texting should be limited to scheduling, attendance, and sharing information with a group.
- Staff members must use their Beth El email accounts to communicate with

- children.
- With regard to social media, only Beth El social networking profiles or social networking profiles used in affiliation with Beth El for professional purposes only can be used for communication with children and only with parent/guardian permission.
  - Staff and volunteers should not accept or initiate social media interactions from a child utilizing a personal social media account. Requests for social media interactions may be accepted when using a social networking profile that is used in affiliation with Beth El for professional purposes only.
  - The posting of photos or other images of minors on social networking sites may only be done with the written permission of the child's parent/guardian, including any re-posting of pictures.
  - The tagging and inclusion of names on social media sites is prohibited.

## Photography and Videography

Beth El actively promotes photographic recording of our community for archival and promotional purposes. We also acknowledge that images of children are at risk of being used inappropriately or illegally. The following rules apply to photography *and* videography of children at Beth El:

- Written permission from the child's parents/guardian must be obtained prior to the public posting of any photographic images or video recordings taken of children at Beth El.
  - These images may include those used for promotional purposes, including, but not limited to, the Beth El website, Facebook page, Instagram, press releases, promotional flyers and other electronic or printed means of communication.
  - This permission may be obtained through an annual permission/consent.
- No photography may be conducted inside changing areas or bathrooms under any circumstances or any place or time when a child is in a state of undress.
- Images of children may not include identifying personal information such as: full name, address, phone number.
- All photographers/videographers seeking permission to photograph at Beth El must agree to and adhere to the guidelines set forth by this statement.
- Any image (digital or other) of a child, taken with permission, but which unintentionally reveals private body parts, violates these rules, or is otherwise not suitable for public display is to be destroyed or deleted.
- Photographs and videos taken by staff on personal cameras or devices must be uploaded to a Beth El designated platform and then deleted from the personal device by the end of the school year.
- Any Beth El employee or volunteer who becomes aware of an inappropriate photograph being shared in any way must report to their supervisor, Executive Director, Senior Rabbi or President.

## Drugs and Alcohol

The supply of drugs or alcohol to anyone under the age of 21 is a criminal offense. Similarly it is prohibited for adults to interact with teens or children while under the influence or in possession of drugs or alcohol. The supply of tobacco to minors is also prohibited.

## Transportation

Staff members and volunteers may from time to time be in a position to provide transportation for children. Children should never be transported without written parental permission, a record must be kept at Beth El.

## Sleeping Arrangements

Beth El's children programming may occasionally include overnight sleeping arrangements for children and staff members. In the event that an activity requires sleeping arrangements, these child safety guidelines will be considered in making arrangements.

For Beth El family sleepover events where parents are present (ie: Kallah retreat) parents are responsible for any and all decisions relating to sleeping arrangements for their children.

Two adults should always be present when there is a Synagogue event that includes groups sleeping in the same area.

## Training

Beth El is committed to education on prevention and recognition of child abuse as well as learning when and how to report abuse and maltreatment of children. Completion of annual training on abuse prevention is required for all Beth El staff members and volunteers who regularly interact with children. Beth El will offer annual training, workshops, and other educational opportunities for adult congregants.

When new staff and regular volunteers working with children begin at Beth El, they will be expected to complete training within one month of beginning their employment.

Training will be consistent with the requirements outlined in the following chart:

## Training Schedule

Group	Awareness Training*	Training Frequency	Coordinator
Teachers	✓	Annually	Education Director + Nursery School Director
Camp Counselors	✓	Annually	Camp Director
Synagogue Staff that interact with children and Clergy	✓	Annually	Executive Director
Synagogue staff that do NOT regularly interact with children	✓	Every other year	Executive Director
Volunteers Working with Children	✓	Annually	Relevant Department Director
Synagogue Members	Training, and/or Sermon, and/or Community Event	Annually	Executive Director

\*Staff and volunteer awareness training is completed every other year via Abuse Prevention Systems online portal: [www.abusepreventionsystems.com](http://www.abusepreventionsystems.com). As staff/teacher training is required annually, other training opportunities will be arranged by the Executive Director or Education Director either in person or virtually.

## Training Policy Dissemination and Affirmation

This Policy shall be disseminated widely to the Beth El community through publications, public discussion, educational opportunities, rabbinic teachings, training programs and other means of communication that will raise awareness and create a safe environment for our children. The policy will be available on the Beth El website, in the Beth El office and will be communicated to every member. Beth El requires all staff and volunteers, whether they regularly interact with children or not, and Board of Trustees members to sign an affirmation indicating that they have read and agree to abide by the terms of this Policy.<sup>1</sup> New employees, volunteers, and Board of Trustee members must read this policy and sign the affirmation in advance of beginning to work at Beth El/Take on their position. In doing so, they affirmatively demonstrate their understanding of and agreement to adhere to this policy.

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<sup>1</sup> Affirmation attached as Appendix C.

## Staff and Volunteer Screening and Hiring

The objective of this section is to ensure that employees and volunteers who will interact with Beth EI's children are appropriately vetted so that Beth EI can provide a safe and nurturing environment for all of our children. This process clearly illustrates to all employee/volunteer applicants and to our community that Beth EI is committed to protecting our children.

The screening process for staff will include the following elements depending upon the position applied for (*see Application and Screening Table below*):

- Submission of resume and cover letter
- Employment application form
- Personal interview
- Two-three phone reference checks
- Criminal background check

Applicants are informed during an initial conversation that Beth EI is vigilant in the protection of our children. During the interview, the applicant's beliefs and values in relation to the treatment of children and young people (including beliefs about discipline and reinforcement), his or her reasons for wanting to work with children and young people, and general awareness and understanding of child protection issues and this policy are explored.

Beth EI requires a current criminal background check, including a search of the sex offender registry to be completed for all staff hires and volunteers. No individual can begin work at Beth EI until a background check is complete and does not reveal any questionable or unfavorable information that could impact the role and responsibilities. If an employee is arrested or convicted while employed at Beth EI they are required to report this information to the Executive Director. Beth EI has the discretion to re-screen any individual earlier than the three year period and to terminate employment at any point for concerns regarding an individual's ability/reliability to keep children safe.

All staff members and volunteers are required to read and acknowledge receipt of this policy prior to commencing their responsibilities at Beth EI.

## Screening Chart

	<b>Employee- Non Youth Serving)</b>	<b>Youth Serving Employee- FT and PT (ie: NS, RS, Camp, clergy, Bnei Mitzvah tutor, Tot Shabbat)</b>	<b>Youth Serving Volunteers- regular basis</b>	<b>Youth Serving Volunteers- intermittent</b>	<b>Volunteers- Non Youth Serving</b>
Resume and Cover Letter AND/OR Application	Required	Required	Required		
Conversation (phone or in person)	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required
In Person Interview	Required	Required	Required		
Professional Reference Checks (2-3)	Required	Required	Required		
Criminal Background Check (includes sex offender search)	Required	Required	Required		
Affirmation of Child Protection Policy	Required	Required	Required	Required	Required

## Reporting Suspected Abuse

Some members of the Beth El community are mandated reporters of child abuse according to New York State Law (<https://www.nysmandatedreporter.org/MandatedReporters.aspx>). However, all members of our community are responsible for keeping our children safe. Therefore, any staff member or volunteer regardless of status as a mandated reporter, who suspects that a child is being abused or maltreated must take the steps outlined below. In addition, all members of our community are encouraged and empowered to report incidents of suspected child abuse and maltreatment. Beth El staff, volunteers and community members are always welcome and encouraged to reach out to the Executive Director, Senior Rabbi or Synagogue President with any questions or concerns.

1. Ensure the child is in a safe environment.
  2. In cases of emergencies, call 911 immediately.
  3. Once the child is in a safe place, either-
    - a. Immediately report the suspicion to their supervisor, Executive Director, Senior Rabbi, or Synagogue President for support in determining appropriate reporting protocols and ensuring the safety of the child.
- OR**
- b. Immediately report the suspicion to the NYS Office of Children and Family Services (“SCR”)<sup>2</sup> or to the local police (if the abuse is suspected to be a non-family member.) Please note that the Executive Director and Senior Rabbi as well as members of our Child Safety Committee are available to consult with you on this process.
    - i. If the suspicion is first reported to the SCR, then it must next be reported to a supervisor, Executive Director, or Senior Rabbi.
    - ii. If the suspicion is first brought to a supervisor, the supervisor must immediately notify the Executive Director or Senior Rabbi.
    - iii. If any of the above named individuals is the alleged abuser then the suspicion must be reported to the child protection committee.
  - c. The reporting individual is required to complete an Incident Report<sup>3</sup> and share it with their supervisor, the Executive Director or the Senior Rabbi.
    - i. This report, as well as all information obtained, must be maintained in a private manner with respect for the sensitivity and confidentiality of this information.

Mandated reporters are obligated to swiftly report suspected child abuse or maltreatment to the authorities. There may be cases in which reporting to the SCR is not appropriate and instead, reports may need to be made to a different governmental agency (e.g., District Attorney’s office, Police Enforcement, Federal Hotline).

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<sup>2</sup> The telephone number for NY State legally mandated reporters is (800) 635-1522 and the telephone number for all others is (800) 342- 3720.

<sup>3</sup> Incident report is attached as Appendix A.

Under law, any person who reports suspected child abuse or maltreatment in good faith to authorities cannot be held civilly or criminally liable. Similarly, Beth El will not take any retaliatory personnel action against staff or volunteers that in good faith report suspected abuse or maltreatment.

These matters must not be discussed with anyone in the community other than the supervisor, Executive Director, Senior Rabbi, Synagogue President, designated members of the Child Safety Committee or someone they may designate.

Whenever Beth El leadership becomes aware of allegations or legal findings of child maltreatment, whether the allegation/finding is regarding an alleged event that took place at the present time or at a time in the past, leadership may consult with members of our Child Safety Committee, and/or appropriate legal, mental health and other relevant professionals to determine appropriate and adequate action. Each situation will have complicated specific circumstances that must be taken into account to determine appropriate next steps.

Any violation of this policy reported to Beth El leadership, will initiate actions that may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Immediate actions to protect the child
- Notify the child's parents or guardians of the allegations (notification may not be appropriate if parent/guardian is the accused or if it would hinder an investigation by relevant authorities.)
- Separate the alleged violator from the child and other children at Beth El
- Notify police of the occurrence
- Notify the State Central Registry
- If the incident involves a Beth El employee or volunteer, an investigation may be conducted and appropriate disciplinary action may be taken, up to and including termination. Immediate suspension of access to children in the synagogue may be implemented. Suspension pending discussion of the alleged incident by Beth El leadership may be implemented.
- If an investigation is conducted, we will work with appropriate authorities to minimize any risk that our work will interfere with civil or criminal investigations. If at all possible, we will also seek a neutral expert to conduct any investigation.
- If the incident involves a Beth El member, a warning, limited access, assignment of a *Shomer* (someone to watch the member when on premises), or termination of membership may be considered.
- Notify other synagogues of the actions taken by Beth El if it is determined that the individual may seek to be employed at or participate in services or other activities at those synagogues.
- A discussion regarding the violation between the violator and members of Beth El's professional and/or lay leadership. It is advisable that at least two members of leadership be present for any conversations.
- Referral of the child for a medical or psychological evaluation and/or mental health supportive services
- Referral of the violator for appropriate supportive and/or mental health assistance.

## Supporting Victims and Survivors of Abuse

In addition to protecting our children, Beth EI is committed to helping our members if they are being victimized in any way. There are safe people to talk to if you need help. We encourage you to reach out to one of our clergy or our Executive Director for help and guidance.

We are here for you.

## Policy Review

The Beth EI Child Safety Committee will engage in an annual review of child safety at Beth EI, which will include:

- Feedback received from staff, volunteers, lay leaders, and the congregation's membership.
- Review of the general compliance of the community with this policy
- Review of incident reports and other allegations of abuse. The privacy of those involved being respected.
- Consultation with experts to ensure that we are up to date with current research and best practices.

*We acknowledge and thank Conservative Synagogue Adath Israel of Riverdale (CSAIR) for their guidance in the drafting of this policy and for allowing us to use their child safety policy as a guide in the creation of our own.*

## Appendix A

### Policy Safety Incident Report Part 1

*This form should be used to report any potential violation of the Beth El Child Protection Policy, boundary violations, disclosures of abuse, child safety concerns, or other behaviors or allegations of behavior that might jeopardize the safety of a child. Proof or first-hand direct knowledge of a behavior or incident is not necessary to submit this form. The information contained in this report is confidential and will only be shared as part of its discussion regarding the incident with the Senior Rabbi, Synagogue President, Executive Director and designated members of the Child Safety Committee, and/or appropriate legal, mental health and other relevant professionals and legal authorities if so directed.*

1. Date/Time of incident/behavior

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2. Location of incident/behavior

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3. Name individual(s) – adult or child –who may have violated the Child Protection Policy, harmed or potentially harmed a child, or who otherwise engaged in a concerning behavior

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4. Name of the child(ren) involved in noted incident

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5. Describe, with as many details as possible, the incident/behavior

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6. Action taken:

Action	Yes or No	Details
Sought Medical Attention		
Called CPS		
Called Parents		
Called Police		
Notified Supervisor		
Notified Safety Committee		

7. Individual submitting this report:

\_\_\_\_\_

*Printed Name*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Email Address*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Cell phone number*

*Please submit this form to your supervisor, Executive Director, Synagogue President or Senior Rabbi.*

## Appendix B

### Resources

Sacred Spaces <http://www.jewishsacredspaces.org/>

New York State - Child Protective Services, main web page <http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/cps/>

Preventing Child Sexual Abuse within Youth Serving Organizations Center for Disease Control  
<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/preventingchildsexualabuse-a.pdf>

Summary Guide for Mandated Reporters New York State  
<http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/publications/Pub1159.pdf>

Safehorizon  
<https://www.safehorizon.org/get-help/child-abuse/#our-impact/>

Creating Child Safe Institutions Royal Commission (Australia)  
<http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/getattachment/5d0dc659-68c2-46f9-847b-fafd52f58673/Creating-child-safe-institutions>

Key Elements of Child Safe Organisations - Research Study Royal Commission (Australia)  
<http://childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/getattachment/5d988506-a260-4b7a-b5bc-4f5555f2d2ca/Key-Elements-of-Child-Safe-Organisations>

Preventing Abuse in Jewish Organizations that Serve Youth: Ten Policies to Create Safer Environments  
<http://ejewishphilanthropy.com/preventing-abuse-in-jewish-organizations-that-serve-youth-tenpolicies-to-create-safer-environments/>

**BETH EL SYNAGOGUE CENTER  
CHILD PROTECTION POLICY  
STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AGREEMENT**

I have received and read a copy of Beth El Synagogue Center's Child Protection Policy and understand the importance of the matters set forth within it. I agree to follow and abide by these guidelines during my service at Beth El.

Further, I understand that the manual may be modified at any time, and that any guideline may be amended or revised at any time by Beth El. I understand that it is my responsibility to review new guidelines that are created and distributed.

*Additional Acknowledgement For Volunteers:*

*I further acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this policy statement in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between Beth El Synagogue Center and me.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date