APPENDIX [A]

Safeguards: Positive and Appropriate forms of Affection

Love and affection are part of church life and ministry. There are many ways to demonstrate affection while maintaining positive safe boundaries.

**Appropriate** – Some positive and appropriate forms of affection are listed below:

- Brief hugs
- Pats on the shoulder or back
- Handshakes
- “High fives” and hand slapping
- Verbal praise
- Touching hands, faces, shoulders and arms of children or youth
- Arms around shoulders
- Holding hands while walking with small children
- Sitting beside small children
- Kneeling or bending down for hugs with small children
- Holding hands during prayer
- Pats on the head when culturally appropriate

**Inappropriate** – The following forms of affection are considered inappropriate, especially with children and youth in ministry setting because many of them are the behaviors that child molesters use to “groom” children or youth for later molestation or can be, in and of themselves, sexual abuse. Examples include:

- Inappropriate or lengthy embraces
- Kisses on the mouth
- Holding children over three years old on the lap
- Touching bottoms, chest or genital areas other than for appropriate diapering or toileting of infants and toddlers.
- Showing affection in isolated areas such as bedrooms, closets, or other private rooms
- Occupying a bed with a child or youth
- Touching knees or legs of children or youth
- Wrestling with children or youth
- Tickling children or youth
- Piggyback rides
- Any type of massage given by a child or youth to an adult; by an adult to a child or youth
- Any form of unwanted affection
- Comments or compliments (spoken, written or electronic) that relate to physique or body development.
- Snapping bras or giving “wedgies” or similar touch of underwear whether or not it is covered by other clothing
- Giving gifts or money to individual children or youth except for group awards or Christmas or birthday acknowledgments, etc.

**Sample Plan for Supervising changing / bathing for Youth and/or Children**

Plans should be made to provide reasonable privacy for showering. A sample plan might look like this: Boys and Girls will shower in separate areas or at separate times. A minimum of two adults of the same gender will be outside the bathroom or shower facility but within hearing range during the time that youth are showering. Should there be a need to respond to a situation in the shower area, both adults should respond. Youth will be sent to the shower area a few at a time. The number of youth sent to the shower area should not exceed the number of showers. If at all possible, private changing areas should be provided.

[Appendix A]