



AND

CHILD SAFETY

Updated: December 2023

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Forward

While this document is written primarily to our members, our first apology is rightly to the MKs who were victims of abuse and to their families.

To those who have been impacted by abuse as a result of the failures of individuals and our organization, we want to express our deepest sorrow. The things we have learned through the investigative reports, and those things we still may not know about, should never have happened to you or to any child or family. May we never forget the cost of these failures to our children, our members, and the God we endeavor to represent.

Introduction

The stories of the Missionary Kids (MKs) who suffered the atrocities of abuse are a grim reminder of the ongoing consequences of the sins committed against them. Sadly, abuse and mistreatment of children is part of the history of New Tribes Mission. There is no excuse for the wrongs that occurred. Nothing can justify the actions of those individuals who harmed children or protected abusers. In writing this document, we do not want to forget or minimize the consequences of these actions. We believe it is appropriate and right that the MKs have come forward with their stories, and we thank them for their bravery and tenacity. We believe it is appropriate to make this history known. Additionally, we hope that anyone reading this will learn from our mistakes. We do not want to see this history repeated. The damage is long lasting. The cost is too high. We implore any reader to remain vigilant in your ministry, your life, and the opportunities you have to care for and protect children.

In this document, we will identify some failures and factors that contributed to abuse within NTM. We will address failures, miscommunications, and lack of information regarding the historical investigation process. We will talk through why Ethnos360 did not publicly release the names of those who have abused children and explain why we made a shift in that thinking. In this document, we are releasing names of certain individuals who were found to have committed acts of sexual abuse according to Ethnos360's definitions. These findings have come through the course of inquiry or admission. The individuals named were still living at the time of publication, and therefore may still pose a risk to children. The specific information on names being released can be found later in this document.

Failures and Factors Contributing to Abuse

At the time NTM was founded (1942), the world had a wartime mentality. The cost of everything was high. Much had been sacrificed and lost. Soon after our founding, our first five martyrs lost their lives. The cost of the task at hand was very real, very personal, and seemed so very urgent.

During those days, much of the military terminology and structure prevalent in U.S. culture was adopted into mission terminology and culture. We had boot camps, work detail, and headquarters. We had highly structured programs, systems of discipline, and leadership teams. While we organizationally taught grace very seriously, the words "conformity" and "legalism" would have accurately described our mission culture. The urgency of the task of getting the gospel out to those who had never heard drove us single-mindedly toward that goal. This often came at a great cost to individuals and families.

Our structure differed little until the 1990s, when the Executive Committee began evaluating where we were as an organization. They created the Training Program Review Committee (TPRC) to look at our training programs, listen to complaints, and receive any input members desired to give to our top leadership. The TPRC spent substantial time going to each of our training centers throughout the U.S., interviewing and inviting dialogue about the culture of NTM. At the end of this, the TPRC presented its findings to the Executive Committee (EC), and our leaders were devastated. This prompted an apology letter by the EC in 1997 to all NTM members that has since become known as “Grace Rediscovered.” The letter apologized for their leadership style, acknowledging that it led to people being treated poorly, and that leaders had been defensive when their authority was questioned. The Executive Committee took responsibility for the culture they had fostered, a culture which led to many failures. They then began the slow process of building a healthier environment for members. Although child safety was not a part of the focus of the TPRC, the cultural issues they identified had helped form the mindset of those individuals who were receiving reports of abuse, handling discipline, and attempting to lead through these situations.

The growing awareness of cultural and leadership failures coming to light in the 1990s marked the beginning of changes in our training centers, discipline, terminology, and a noticeable move away from the previous legalism. The leadership style of our organization today, while not infallible, is quite different from what was in place when these cases of abuse happened.

Often in U.S. culture and in our history, sexual abuse was looked at as a form of adultery. Because of this, it was often dealt with according to biblical principles regarding adultery without an understanding of the differences that needed to be accommodated when a child was involved. For example, when an offender was confronted about an act that would today be recognized as child sexual abuse, if the offender expressed remorse, they were then taken through steps of reconciliation and some form of restoration. There was not an understanding of the reality that some individuals were serial offenders, nor was there the ability to recognize and fully address the abuse, including that additional children might also have been abused. There was little to no understanding of the complex needs of a child after abuse.

Awareness and Understanding

During the 1990s, in part because of more abuse accounts being brought forward by MKs, our understanding of abuse was growing. We began to learn that the impact of abuse was much greater than previously understood or even imagined. Even though we had dismissed individuals for abuse as early as 1960, we realized that mere dismissals were not bringing closure to those who had been abused. We started forming child safety policies and guidelines, offering counseling, and seeking to better care for families while also investigating allegations of abuse. By the late 1990s, many investigations had already taken place, though most had been handled internally.

In 2004, NTM established its first globally recognized child safety manual. Prior to this, many fields had their own policies, but 2004 marked the first time in NTM that we had a unified governing child protection policy. This progress in child safety is the reason that historical inquiries mainly addressed events from 1942 to January 2004.

By 2009, it again became apparent that our efforts in addressing historical allegations were falling short. This realization came in part because of the online pressure created by MKs speaking out. During this time, NTM continued to pay for counseling and made renewed efforts to work through abuse allegations that were known.

Internationalization

Also important to this timeline of events, in 2007 the Executive Committee dissolved NTM in the form that had existed since 1942. No longer did the U.S. offices speak into decisions and planning for overseas locations. At the time of this internationalization, a “Global Ministry Agreement” document was created. This document would guide the works of the former NTM in the areas of doctrine, core values, church planting strategy, child safety, and security. At that time, additionally, field leadership teams became autonomous, and every field-level leadership team was equal under the guidance of this document. A new leadership team was established to lead the U.S. portion of NTM, called NTM USA. This new U.S. leadership team was called the U.S. Executive Board.

When the issues of abuse came to the forefront again in 2009, it was difficult to determine how we would handle ongoing investigations since our organizational structure had changed, and each entity was separate. NTM USA chose to take on the task of facilitating the investigations of historical abuse allegations involving worldwide locations.

G.R.A.C.E. and IHART¹

It became apparent that we needed the help of an independent third party to carry out the investigations due to our culture, previous shortcomings in leadership style, and rightful lack of trust from our MKs and their families. It was obvious that NTM USA was not able to carry out the inquiries on our own. The desire to bring closure to victims and ensure the safety of our children culminated with the hiring of G.R.A.C.E. for an investigation in 2009. G.R.A.C.E. completed the work they had been contracted for in 2010 when they concluded the Fanda review.

In looking at the scope of work that was before us, we made the decision after that investigation to hire Ms. Pat Hendrix, who had experience in historical child abuse cases for the Presbyterian Church (USA). The name of the process used in the PC(USA) inquiry was IARP, the Independent Abuse Review Panel. When Ms. Hendrix agreed to take on the responsibility of historical investigations for NTM USA, a similar process was implemented with the name IHART, standing for Independent Historical Abuse Response Team.

The shift to IHART maintained the original goals of the investigations. NTM USA and G.R.A.C.E. had areas of disagreement regarding methodology. However, both IHART and G.R.A.C.E. desired that MKs have an avenue to share their stories and have them validated and acted upon. IHART and G.R.A.C.E. both wanted to see perpetrators and

offenders brought to justice. Both IHART and G.R.A.C.E. sought to improve current mission policy and process to increase the protection of current and future MKs and prevent any other children from suffering as these MKs did. The disagreements that NTM USA had with G.R.A.C.E. were not within these fundamental goals, but rather the methods of achieving them.

As we progressed through the first investigations with IHART, we came to realize that having an attorney at the helm of an investigative team, such as Mr. Boz Tchividjian with G.R.A.C.E., provided an additional layer of legal protection for the MKs' stories beyond the confidentiality IHART was already offering through Ms. Hendrix. Thus, we shifted from Ms. Hendrix to Ms. Theresa Sidebotham in 2014. Ms. Sidebotham is an MK and a mother of MKs. She has an extensive background in many areas of child protection. Ethnos360 recognizes that to some it looks like we "lawyered up." However, we believe this model was in the best interest of all who shared their stories with IHART.

Ms. Sidebotham also resolved some of the outstanding issues with the investigations by providing better communication available through her www.ihart.care website to anyone interested. She had country-specific updates for current investigations. She also provided ongoing training and up-to-date standards for the investigative teams.

As the investigations continued to progress, it was realized that IHART was dealing with allegations that went beyond child abuse to other types of misconduct and mistreatment of children. In 2014, the IHART acronym was updated to the Independent Historical Allegation Review Team. The change was intended to more accurately reflect the broad scope of the inquiries. Our desire has been to know if any child was mistreated, even if the actions did not rise to the level of abuse.

Independent Inquiries: What they are and what they are not

Both IHART and Ethnos360 were very limited in that these were employment inquiries, not criminal investigations. We now use the term "inquiry" to maintain this distinction. Without the involvement of a judicial system, a criminal investigation is not possible. If a criminal investigation were possible, the evidentiary standard would be "beyond a reasonable doubt." This would bring a high level of certainty regarding events. In an employment inquiry, the evidentiary standard is "preponderance of the evidence," simply meaning it is more likely to have happened than not. Historical employment inquiries can rarely provide evidence rising to the legal level of "beyond a reasonable doubt." Therefore, we did not, until the first publishing of this document in 2020, release the names of the accused.

The question still surfaces as to whether any of these inquiries were truly independent. It is true and necessary that NTM USA (now Ethnos360) has paid for all the independent inquiries that have taken place, from G.R.A.C.E. to IHART, with a few other NTM entities contributing as they were able. Without this funding, these inquiries would not have happened. There was no other way to facilitate the completion of these inquiries than for Ethnos360 to pay for them.

Ethnos360's other role in the inquiries has been to provide open access for the inquiry teams to our files on historical allegations, previous inquiries, and dates of service for members and former members. We do not know who brought allegations against an alleged offender or leader unless the individual chooses to speak directly to us. We did not have influence over the IHART team or their plans, nor did we have influence over the Master Reports, or the findings contained in them. The IHART Coordinator brought together a Recommendations Panel of independent experts who evaluated inquiry findings and made disciplinary recommendations to our Board. The Board has accepted (or exceeded) all these recommendations. This definition of independence is true of both G.R.A.C.E. and all subsequent IHART teams.

Reporting

NTM/Ethnos360 reported credible allegations of child abuse from the G.R.A.C.E. report to the appropriate authorities in the state of Florida (where we are incorporated) and to the local authorities where the individual lived when findings were completed. NTM/Ethnos360 continued to report in the same manner during the early years of IHART, but the IHART team later did all reporting. Deceased individuals were not reported to the authorities, as reports of that type are not accepted.

Unfortunately, prior to the PROTECT Act of 2003, little could be done in the U.S. regarding acts that took place overseas. In cases of historical abuse, such as those addressed by G.R.A.C.E. and IHART, often an additional factor is the statute of limitations. Many reports have not been accepted by the authorities because of either time elapsed or jurisdiction. IHART made sure that appropriate reporting was completed regardless of the age of the allegation. Additionally, Ethnos360 also recommends that all victims report their allegations of abuse to the authorities. IHART reported to the authorities of the country of citizenship for non-U.S. individuals.

Terminology

We want to publicly recognize that in some of our early writings, we used terms that minimized the impact of abuse. This was not our intent, and we are deeply sorry for the hurt this caused the victims, their families, and others.

Additionally, terminology surrounding disciplinary action of employees was an issue. In the early days of NTM, many terms were used internally that today mean something else entirely. Today we would say someone was "dismissed" or "fired." Previously "dismissal" could have been termed as "terminated," "forced resignation," or even "resigned" in many cases.

Currently, anyone previously named in a historical inquiry with a finding of sexual child abuse has their personnel record marked "ineligible for rehire." This eliminates any confusion in the future as to the reason for their dismissal and notes that the dismissal cannot be reversed.

Current Definitions

As a Christian organization that uses the Word of God as our final authority, we have a higher standard for the treatment of children than that of the legal definitions of abuse. This has caused tension at times. It should be noted that when we say someone has committed an act of abuse according to our definitions, it may not rise to the legal standard of abuse required by the U.S. judicial system to seek prosecution.

Within Ethnos360, we define sexual abuse as: *The involvement of a child in sexual activity by an adult or another child who by age or development is in a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power. Sexual abuse can include, but is not limited to verbal, visual, and/or physical behavior.* This means that it is possible to violate Ethnos360's definition of sexual abuse without committing a criminal act as defined by the U.S. judicial system. It can even be something such as a conversation of a sexual nature with a child. Acts of sexual abuse involving a child and an adult result in the adult being dismissed and ineligible for rehire.

We define sexual misconduct as: *The involving of a child in behavior that is greater than a boundary violation, but not at the level of sexual abuse, often termed "grooming."* We define grooming as *"building an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation."* While "sexual misconduct" may not be criminal behavior, we recognize that the offense and harm caused may be the same to the child as sexual abuse. Sexual misconduct involving a child and an adult result in the adult being dismissed and ineligible for rehire.

Ethnos360 uses the term "boundary violation" when there is an incident of socially inappropriate behavior without sexual intent. We discuss this area in these terms: *We all have personal likes and things that make us uncomfortable. Personal space is the private area of control inside an imaginary line or boundary that defines each person as separate. It varies with individuals and cultures. Ideally, that boundary helps us stay in charge of our own personal space. It helps keep out the things that make us uncomfortable – unsafe and unwanted feelings, words, images, and physical contact. Solid social rules strengthen this boundary. Behaviors that routinely disrespect or ignore boundaries make children vulnerable to abuse.* Boundary violations brought to our attention receive disciplinary or instructive action. There is no sexual intent associated with a boundary violation. Dismissal would not be necessary should the action be corrected.

We feel it is necessary to discuss the term pedophilia. The term "pedophilia" is defined by Merriam-Webster as "A sexual perversion in which an adult has sexual fantasies about or engages in sexual acts with a prepubescent child." This word is often used to describe any sexual act toward a child. However, solely using this term in all situations would be inaccurate. While we abhor any action that harms a child and admit that acts of pedophilia occurred within NTM, our definition of sexual abuse is much broader than pedophilia. We dismiss for any violation of our sexual abuse or sexual misconduct policies, meaning most who were dismissed did not commit an act of pedophilia. Thankfully, many situations of abuse or misconduct have been caught long before a child was sexually touched; sadly, some were not. The numbers and names listed later in this document are based on our definitions of abuse.

We define physical abuse as: *That which results in the threat of non-accidental physical harm or in actual non-accidental physical harm from an interaction within the control of a parent or person in a position of responsibility, power, or trust. Inflicted physical injury most often represents unreasonably severe corporal punishment or unjustified punishment. Physical abuse may involve single or repeated incidents.*

It should be noted that within NTM/Ethnos360 history, findings of physical abuse were generally unreasonably severe corporal punishment or unjustified punishment.

We define emotional abuse as: *acts toward a child that cause or have a high probability of causing harm to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral, or social development. Acts could be patterns of constant belittling, denigrating, threatening, scaring, discriminating, ridiculing, unrealistic expectations and demands, or other non-physical forms of hostility.*

Acts of sexual and physical abuse almost always involve emotional abuse. The scars of emotional abuse are deep yet often unseen.

Historical Numbers

Since NTM's formation in 1942, over 11,000 individuals have worked with our organization(s) in various capacities and locations around the globe.

To date:

- 39 individuals were found to have committed acts of sexual abuse according to our definitions and were dismissed. These individuals may also have committed acts of physical and/or emotional abuse but were dismissed for sexual abuse.
- 7 individuals were found to have committed acts of sexual misconduct according to our definitions and were dismissed. These individuals may also have committed acts of physical and/or emotional abuse but were dismissed for sexual misconduct.
- 38 individuals were found to have committed acts of physical abuse, generally unreasonably severe corporal punishment or unjustified punishment, and were all dismissed or removed from active ministry based on the level of offense that took place. These individuals may also have committed emotional abuse.

Emotional abuse was also investigated. Rarely does an individual commit an act of physical or sexual abuse without also committing emotional abuse. There have been few individuals identified through the inquiry found to have committed emotional abuse who were not involved in another type of abuse.

Release of Names

The G.R.A.C.E. report, with its two amendments, contained the names of the alleged offenders of all types of offenses and leadership who were found by a preponderance of evidence to have violated standards regarding the protection of children. IHART also released names in the first report that it produced. The later IHART public reports did not have names in them. The standard of evidence for the findings in all these reports was "more likely than not," meaning there could have been up to a 49% possibility that the

action had not occurred. This standard is far less than what is required for criminal proceedings. Because of this, IHART did not change its position on releasing names.

However, this document shows a shift in the position of Ethnos360 on that practice. We share in the concerns expressed by the MK community that someone who committed an act of child sexual abuse in the era prior to 2004, particularly overseas, is most likely not going to be prosecuted. Because of this, the individual will not appear on a sexual offender registry or other watch list. This could allow them to leave our organization, appearing to be in good standing, and potentially allow them to continue to have access to children within other ministry settings or communities.

Our goal remains the safety of all children. As a result, in 2020 Ethnos360 changed its position and released names of those who were found by the inquiry standards to have violated our child sexual abuse policy, and who could still be a threat to children.

We believe it is inappropriate to release the names of individuals who are deceased, as they are no longer a risk to children. We will not be listing the names of those criminally convicted since they are on sex offender registries. We also believe it is not our place to list the names of sexual offenders who, according to inquiry results, abused their own children but no one outside of their immediate family. We desire to protect the identity of those MKs wishing their story not be told. Therefore, we believe releasing names of solely intra-familial offenders is not our place. We are willing to release the names of intra-familial offenders at the request of the children who were victims.

While the findings of these historical inquiries were usually made to the preponderance of the evidence, we note that many of the findings on sexual allegations are above that standard, and if they were taken to court, we believe they would reach the standard of beyond a reasonable doubt. As mentioned above, one of our goals in the process of these inquiries was to protect the children of today and tomorrow within our organization and in our ministries. With the continued public reminders that individuals who admit to committing atrocities against children are living freely in society and without legal recourse against them, we determined that a public listing is appropriate of those who have violated (at a minimum) our organizational child safety standards regarding sexual abuse. Because of this, we are providing a listing of the names of those whose actions clearly violated our organizational definition of sexual abuse.

At the writing of this document, the following list of names are those who were found to have violated NTM/NTM USA/Ethnos360 child safety policies in the area of sexual abuse of children within the above criteria from 1942 until today. Any additional names that are discovered will be added to this listing.

LIST:

1. Dave McLaren (1975)
2. Robin Slade (1978)
3. Ann Lotz (1979)
4. Terri McCall (1989)
5. David Brooks (1990)
6. Robert Fisher (1991)
7. Dennis Mead (1992)
8. Harold Bracken (1993)
9. Les Emory (1993)
10. Mark Ertl (1994)
11. Jim Bou (1998)
12. Steve Armour (1999)
13. Reginaldo Goulart (2002)
14. Peter Thiessen (2002)
15. Phil Gates (Resigned 1994)
(Retroactively terminated in 2010)
16. Paul Gess (2017)
17. Kim Cooper (Resigned 1996)
(Ineligible for rehire post PNG
IHART Inquiry 2022)
18. Rand Burgett (2022)
19. Dan Jennett (Abuse occurred prior
to membership.) (Resigned 2007)
(Ineligible for rehire)

Note: Numbers above reflect date individuals were removed from the organization.

We are aware that some of these individuals, because their names had not been released, have at times been welcomed onto our properties. This must immediately stop, and we have taken steps to ensure this. We respect the safety concerns of the MKs previously abused and of our children today.

There are ten individuals who are not named in this listing because they were already deceased when this list was first published. There are two individuals not named because their actions were solely against their own children. They will be named if the victim requests it. They will also be named if they later have additional findings against a non-family member. There are an additional five individuals who were criminally convicted for child abuse outside of the IHART process. Those criminally convicted are not included in this list because they are already in the public record and/or sex offender registries.

There are three names that we are not releasing in this document even though they were found to be in violation of our sexual abuse policies. For one person, while grievous, the action was not ongoing and did not involve any direct contact with a minor. For the other two individuals, there are extenuating circumstances that we cannot discuss.

There is one name included above whose actions were listed in the G.R.A.C.E. Report as sexual misconduct. However, we define this person's actions as sexually abusive, so we have included the name here.

Other Categories: Names Not Released

While we dismiss for sexual misconduct according to our definitions, we are not releasing the names of those individuals. They remain permanently ineligible for rehire within our organization.

While God's standard on sexual conduct is the same today as it has always been, physical abuse is not as easy to define. Corporal punishment was, for many years, an acceptable form of discipline within society at large. This is in no way an attempt to justify the physical abuse and inappropriate discipline that has taken place, but determining when discipline becomes abuse can be difficult.

We are aware that emotional and spiritual abuse happened within our organization. There are also situations where it would be natural for a child to interpret actions carried out under the care of an individual who is not their parent as emotionally abusive, even including spiritually abusive, without that being the intent of the adult. When one young person felt no effects from an interaction with an adult, a different individual might have felt very hurt from the same exchange. An adult with a large voice or personality could be particularly intimidating in the life or memory of a young person. While we do not want to minimize the impact this could have on a child, it does not necessarily make the alleged offender an abuser. This is in no way an attempt to minimize the level of harm that has occurred. Children have experienced trauma and hurt has taken place. We deeply regret that this harm has occurred.

These reasons are why we have chosen not to release the names of those found to have violated policies in the areas of physical and emotional abuse. However, when an IHART finding showed to the preponderance of the evidence that physical, emotional, or spiritual abuse had taken place, those individuals with findings against them were held accountable through corrective training, ministry changes, early retirement, or dismissal based on the findings and the response of the individual to those findings.

Finances

We have been asked if money received from our donors is used to fund the abuse inquiries. The short answer is, "No." Our member salaries, projects and operating expenses are funded by generous donors who give to reach those who have never had a chance to hear the gospel. While the typical structure for non-profits today is to designate a percentage of all donations to cover operating expenses and salaries of certain employees, Ethnos360 has never used this structure. Each designated gift for a missionary is used for expenses directly related to that missionary's ministry, not for general organizational operating costs.

We want to emphasize that designated funds from donors are not used to cover any part of the historical inquiries or any costs related to abuse. We have received some gifts designated to the MK counseling fund. These designated counseling funds went to that account in full.

Ethnos360 has other income sources, such as investment income, which are used to cover our operating expenses and other areas that do not typically receive many designated funds. Ethnos360 uses these funds to cover the expenses associated with the historical inquiries and counseling.

Acknowledgement and Changes to Date

The things we have learned from the MKs who have come forward and through the inquiries findings have been painful. The burden of abuse was carried for many years, mainly by MKs and their families. We hope to share in that load by acknowledging our past. We severely underestimated the power and deception of sin, and some of our MKs paid dearly for that. We did not understand the impact of abuse, or that our actions and inaction in response to their reporting abuse compounded the hurt. We are devastated to know that ongoing trauma was caused by those inside our organization who either abused children or did not handle reports from children appropriately.

We have learned that there are three main factors of risk that play a role in child abuse. Many of our overseas locations had all three risk factors present.

We recognize that:

- Low levels of accountability bring about high levels of risk.
- In any situation of isolation there is greater risk of harm to children.
- In an imbalance of power and control there is great risk.

Those who committed acts of abuse towards children took advantage of these factors to carry out their atrocities. We have attempted to eliminate these three risk factors in ministry locations, both stateside and overseas, through physical changes in buildings, policies of access to children, and increased training and screening.

In the early days of NTM, there were limited options for the education of children. In most situations, the only option available was boarding school, and it was often the case that boarding school was mandatory. Just like many ministry locations, boarding schools were typically in areas that were highly isolated, with low levels of accountability, and a great imbalance of power and control in favor of dorm parents and teachers over students. This was compounded by the distance the schools were from the parents and the limited communication options for parents and children in that day.

Recruiting and training for schools was often not a high priority. Some individuals were both unsuited and frustrated at being assigned to work in a boarding school. When this happened, it was an unhealthy situation for all involved, and children often took the brunt of the adult frustration.

Today, we actively recruit qualified personnel for schools. Our members recognize the privilege and responsibility that it is to work with the children of their co-workers. This situation has also changed greatly because of the types of schooling options available today. Schooling choices are now determined by the parents. Most of our members choose to homeschool when overseas. The ability to make these choices empowers parents in a way

that was not available to our members in the past. Currently only a very small percentage of our members' children are boarding, and all of these are at the family's choice. One reality that was hard to accept was the very idea that abuse did happen within NTM. We did not think any of our members would do something that would harm another person, certainly not a child. Today, we realize that the phrase "stranger danger" was overused and is outdated. We now know that most of the abuse in society is perpetrated by someone who is known and trusted by the child and the family.

We have come to understand the importance of education in preventing abuse. Ethnos360 provides recurring training to educate members, volunteers, employees, and students about the reality, risks, and warning signs of abuse.

We have also learned that children who are educated in age-appropriate ways regarding abuse or who are empowered to talk to their parents or those in authority are much safer than their peers. We have systems in place designating safe people for each location, and we offer training at our U.S. centers for children of our students and staff. The training available is written by Praesidium and teaches children how to identify appropriate boundaries and what to do should someone violate that space.

We recognize now that Christian organizations such as Ethnos360 were targeted at times by those who wished to gain access to children. Today, Ethnos360 requires an extensive application and references for all positions. Each member undergoes background checks both at the time of application as well as periodically throughout their career. Additionally, there is a substantial interview process for career and associate members. All positions receive training regarding child safety.

Numerous improvements have been made to Ethnos360 childcare policies over the years. Risk has been reduced with the implementation of greater accountability through mandating that childcare workers are not related to each other, having random unannounced checks in childcare facilities, improved classroom design, etc. Corporal punishment within our organization was often misused and over-emphasized. It is now against policy for anyone other than the child's own parents to exercise corporal punishment in any childcare or school setting. We also continue to regularly update our policies and procedures.

Closing

There are MKs who have paid a high price for us to learn the impact of abuse. Our current leadership and members also live with the harm and hurt that was caused by the sins of others. We implore each individual reading this to learn from our mistakes, and to do all that is within your power to not let this happen again.

If you have questions or comments regarding this document, please contact me at personnel-usa@ntm.org.

Respectfully,



Brian Coombs
Director of Personnel
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¹ This section was updated June 2020 to correct the name of Presbyterian Church of America (PCA) to Presbyterian Church (USA). IHARP was corrected from “Independent Abuse Response Process” to “Independent Abuse Review Panel.” Additional clarifying sentence was added to Paragraph 4 to clarify the legal protection offered by having a lawyer head the inquiry team.