**Episcopal Church of New Hampshire**

**Child Sexual Abuse Case Study**

Heather, a 26 year old, had just moved to town, a distant relation of Sally, an elderly, active church member. As it was the beginning of the Sunday School program when Heather asked to volunteer, within a month of arriving, the priest, Pastor Mike, and Sunday School Staff were excited to have her join the team. The first several months the Sunday School team and clergy had noticed Heather building a nice rapport with the kids, always involving them in the lesson for Sunday school. Sometimes, the Sunday School would be short staffed, but Heather was always reliable and willing to even teach on her own when no one else could be there. By Spring, Heather had become quite close to two of her students, Bobby and Jenny, 8 year old twins from the Smith family. The Smiths didn’t have any family in the area so, subsequently, their church and school communities had become their support network. Throughout the year, Heather volunteered to babysit the kids and help with them at home when their parents had to work late.

On Easter Sunday, the kids had prepared a special presentation for the community with a festive party afterwards. At the party, a few of the kids were playing a game of hide and seek on the side lawn of the church. Megan, another Sunday School teacher, observed Bobby engaging other children in a new game of hide and seek. While showing a 4 year old student what happens when she’s found, Bobby touched her crotch. After stopping Bobby, Megan asked where he learned the new hide and seek game. Bobby responded by saying that Heather plays the game with him and his sister, Jenny, when she comes to babysit. Then Megan asked what happens when someone is found. Bobby says, “Heather rubs them or kisses their chest with their shirt up.” In the midst of explaining how Heather rubs them, Bobby shows Megan how Heather touched his “private” and made it hurt. Bobby says that he likes the game, but doesn’t like when he gets found.

**Case Study Questions:**

What Safe Church Policy/Procedures were NOT followed in this case?

What Safe Church Policy/Procedures WERE followed in this case?

At the time of disclosure, what action(s) would you take?

How would you respond to the child’s emotional state at the time of disclosure?