

Victim Impact Statement

On August 2, 2022, the Bethel Buddies Preschool Director received an allegation of misconduct by Joshua LeDuc, a preschool employee. Because Bethel UCC was proactive in installing a video/audio recording system in each classroom and in the hallways, the director was able to view the alleged misconduct on video recording. After reviewing the recording, the director released Mr. LeDuc from employment effective immediately and a report was filed with the Vanderburgh County Department of Child Services agency, and the state licensing consultant for our program. Bethel UCC cooperated with the local authorities as the alleged incident was investigated including sharing the recordings with the authorities. As a result of the investigation, on August 9, 2022 Mr. LeDuc was charged with molesting a child. On February 15, 2023, Mr. LeDuc was charged with molesting a second child. Mr. Leduc plead guilty on April 23, 2024.

Following the incident, additional safeguards were put in place such as: additional cameras were installed throughout our facility, furniture was moved and cabinet doors were removed so as to remove any possible blind spots from the recording equipment.

Per our policy and that of the State of Indiana background checks are done on all staff members and kept current. All preschool staff receive the state required child abuse and neglect training and we go above and beyond by certifying our staff in the Stewards of Children Training. We also have Holly's House present My Body Safety program with all of our Pre-K students and staff. My Body Safety empowers children with skills to help them recognize dangerous situations and talking about unsafe secrets to trusted adults.

Per our Safe Conduct Policy, "Bethel UCC is committed to creating and maintaining programs, facilities and a community in which members, friends, Clergy, employees, and volunteers can worship, learn and work together in an atmosphere free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation or intimidation." We believe that each child in our care is a child of God and should be treated as such. What happened here violated what we hold dear.

The impact of Mr. LeDuc's actions has affected not only the children he molested but has had profound implications for many others. We pray for justice.