

(Redacted)
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Dear Mr. (Redacted),

Because you became bishop after I ceased regular activity in the LDS church, I don't think we had an adequate opportunity to get to know each other. From what interactions we've had you strike me as a very honest and well-meaning person, and because of this I have been glad that you were chosen to serve as bishop of the (Redacted) Ward where my wife and my two children attend on a weekly basis. I hope you realize that none of the expectations I make in this letter are a reflection of what I think about you or your leadership abilities. In fact, I have all of the same expectations for the schools that my children will be attending and any other organization, so I don't mean to single you out in any way or make any accusations. I just want to make it clear that you understand my ground rules with respect to the treatment and handling of my children, (Redacted) and (Redacted).

We still have more than two years before (Redacted) will be eligible for baptism, but I want to make sure we're clear going into the experience and don't have to create any awkward situations when the time comes. As you may or may not be aware, my background is that I was born LDS, baptized when I was eight, grew up in the youth programs, served a two year mission, attended BYU, was married in the temple, and served as executive secretary in two different bishoprics. I consider myself fairly familiar with the policies and teachings of the LDS church, and this letter is a reflection of some of the dangers I perceive from my personal experiences.

I know that a worthiness interview will be required for my children's baptisms. While I object to the worthiness of my children being put to question by anyone, including myself, for good or ill, I will allow for private discussions to be held with my children provided that both parents are present at all times. When I was a youth in the LDS church I was often put in uncomfortable circumstances alone with grown men as part of my church experience, and I want to make sure that this does not happen with my children. Both my wife and I are willing to attend all private discussions with our children, including interviews, until they are 18 years old.

I am aware that these interviews are supposed to include questions about my children's personal sexuality. I will not allow or tolerate any personal questions about my children's sexuality unless they are of purely medical concern and are asked by a licensed medical professional with expertise in the applicable field. I was often asked probing questions about my sexual behavior as an LDS youth, and I want to ensure that this does not happen with my children, as I consider it abusive and violating. I consider this to mean questions of my children's sexuality, including but not limited to general sexuality, chastity, intercourse, masturbation, sexual orientation, and pornography. Modesty will also fall under this category if approached from a sexual basis (ie – inducing sexual thoughts) and not as simply a dress code for entering church premises. I will not allow questions soliciting information from my children on this topic, regardless of the training of the solicitor or the presence of a parent. I will not under any

circumstances allow this type of question to be asked until they are 18 years old and thus out of my legal protection.

With regard to the education of my children on sexual topics, I will allow for detailed and extensive instruction to be given regarding functionality and medical/psychological dangers, if given by a trained professional educated in the appropriate field. However, for any other instruction I will require written consent from both my wife and I. This will extend to all instruction given at any meeting or function of the (Redacted) ward, and will include all topics on sexuality and sexual behavior including but not limited to the list given in the paragraph above. When I was a youth in the LDS church I heard many talks and was taught many lessons which discussed sexual thoughts, words and behavior, all without written consent from my parents. If you think it will be too much trouble to provide me with all lesson and discourse material for my approval before it is given, I would prefer it if sexuality were not discussed with or in the presence of my children at all by anyone other than their parents. I am aware that this will likely not be much of an issue until my children become teenagers, when sexuality is introduced into the LDS curriculum. However, I am also aware that some teachers introduce this topic on their own, and sacrament meeting talks sometimes include such material, so I want to make sure it is handled appropriately if it happens at all – ie, with my consent. I am not opposed to my children being exposed to teachings and ideas of a sexual nature, but for the well-being of their sexual development I expect to be allowed to approve of it first. I will not approve of my children being exposed to the pamphlet called “For the Strength of Youth” or other teachings of similar nature that I find sexually explicit and psychologically harmful.

As one parent speaking to another, I hope you understand that if my expectations above cannot be met I will be obligated on moral grounds to withdraw my consent that my children attend the LDS church until they are 18 years old. If I discover that any of these expectations have been violated in the (Redacted) Ward then I will hold you, as bishop, personally responsible for rectifying the situation and taking necessary steps to ensure it doesn’t happen again. When a new person is called to be bishop of the (Redacted) Ward I expect you to either make him aware of these expectations or inform me so that I can. These expectations are no different than I would have for any organization my children participate in, and I hope you will find them as reasonable as I do.

I await your reply.

Respectfully,

(Redacted)

(Redacted)

(Redacted)

Here is a summarized list of my expectations:

- All private discussions with my children, including interviews, will include both parents present.
- No questions will be asked about my children's personal sexual behavior, or lack thereof, either directly or by implication, by any person.
- Unless conducted by a trained professional in the appropriate field for instructional purposes, my children will not be taught about sexuality without written consent from both my wife and I.
- (Sexuality and sexual behavior will be taken to include but not be limited to general sexuality, chastity, intercourse, masturbation, sexual orientation, and pornography)
- You will personally ensure that these guidelines are enforced in the ~~(Redacted)~~ Ward and passed on to future leadership.