

Safe Sanctuaries Policy

Revised 6/23/06

On-site Procedures

1. In order to protect the children, youth, vulnerable adults (C,Y,VA), staff, and volunteers, individual providers shall not be left alone with a C,Y,VA. They should be within sight or earshot of another adult. The only exceptions to this policy would be where the contact occurs in a public place where other persons are in and out of the area where the provider is working with the C,Y,VA, or a signed waiver has been provided.
 - a. Two adults will be present in classrooms where C,Y,VA are participating in a particular ministry.
 - b. Classroom doors have windows in them to provide visual access.
 - c. Classroom and office doors can be left open to provide auditory access to those in the nearby vicinity. Example: Director of Youth Ministry counseling a youth in his/her office
 - d. Hallways with classrooms will have a “shepherd” present during the hours assigned to that particular ministry.
 - e. Restroom use: A teacher or leader can come to the doorway of their classroom and ask the shepherd to accompany the child to the restroom. The shepherd will wait at the restroom door for the child. If a C,Y,VA require assistance in the restroom, assistance will be from a same sex provider.

2. On-site Ratios are as follows:
 - a. Children (ages 0-2 years) 1:4
 - b. Children (ages 3-5 years) 1:10
 - c. Children (ages 6-12 years) 1:12
 - d. Youth (ages 12-18 years) 1:20

3. The Nursery will be staffed with one paid staff adult and one paid staff youth. Specific training regarding diaper changing and food allergies will be provided by the Director of Children’s Ministry. Other than parents, persons who have not received Safe Sanctuaries training will not be permitted in the nursery.

4. Physical and verbal contact should be as follows:
 - a. Physical affection **initiated by providers** should be limited to side-to-side hugs, pats on the back or forearm, touching the back of the hand and gently squeezing the hand. It is appropriate to ask for permission prior to initiating physical contact. If a child, youth, or vulnerable adult (C,Y,VA) initiates physical contact, the provider should be the one to end the contact.
 - b. It is not appropriate to make lewd or suggestive comments to C,Y,VA. Details or discussions about one's intimate life are inappropriate. Participation in games or activities that encourage inappropriate physical contact will not be permitted.
 - c. Providers should model respectful and nurturing behaviors that do not interfere with another person's privacy.
 - d. Adult volunteers in Youth Ministries will be trained by Director of Youth Ministry in regard to appropriate physical contact: adults to youth, youth to youth (No Purple Policy).

5. Sign-in and sign-out procedure
 - a. All children (ages 3 years through and including fourth grade) participating in Sunday School will need to be signed in and out of the classroom by a parent, guardian, a sibling who is in seventh grade or older, or other adult authorized by the parent. If the provider is not familiar with a child's parent, they will ask for a photo ID.
 - b. All children (ages kindergarten through and including sixth grade) attending the R.O.C.K. in LOGOS ministry will sign in upon arriving at the church after school. Parents will need to sign children out at the end of the program each Wednesday. If a table parent is not familiar with a child's parent, they will ask for a photo ID.
 - c. All children (ages 3 years through and including fourth grade) who attend Wee Worship and Kids Church will need to be signed out by a parent, guardian, a sibling who is in seventh grade or older, or another adult who is authorized by the parent. If the provider is not familiar with a child's parent, they will ask for a photo ID.
 - d. All children through the age of 18 years who attend Friendship Ministry will need to be signed in and out of the program by a parent, guardian, or another adult who is authorized by the parent or guardian. If the provider is not familiar with a child's parent, they will ask for a photo ID.
 - e. All children attending the Nursery will need to be signed in and out by a parent or guardian. A pager will be provided to the parent at the time of sign-in to be returned when the parent returns to pick up their child.

6. Building usage by outside organizations
 - a. All persons or organizations that wish to use the facilities at First United Methodist Church of Saline for an activity that is not church sanctioned or sponsored will receive a Covenant of Participation Form that will need to be signed and returned to the church office prior to the group's first meeting.

Off-site Procedures

1. Driving procedures are to be followed at any time when transporting children, youth, or vulnerable adults (C,Y,VA) to or from church sanctioned ministries.
 - a. In addition to attending the Safe Sanctuaries training and completing the appropriate paperwork, those people who provide transportation must complete the Driver Information Sheet, and provide a copy of their current driver's license, proof of automobile insurance, and registration. This information must be renewed on an annual basis. Drivers must be a minimum of 21 years of age.
 - b. All state laws must be observed, including those regarding seat belts and use of child car seats. Children must be 12 years of age or older to ride in the front seat of a vehicle.
 - c. Special provisions will be made when drivers will be awake all night at lock-ins, retreats, or other events so they are not driving when overtired.
 - d. Youth should be discouraged from driving themselves to off-site activities. A youth will need to provide a waiver stating that he/she is able to transport self and siblings to church sanctioned activities.
 - e. Whenever possible, it is advisable to have two adults in a vehicle when transporting C,Y,VA. When only one adult is present in a vehicle, there must be two C,Y,VA in the vehicle. The only exception is if a parent has signed a waiver stating that their child can ride alone with that adult and the waiver is co-signed by the Director of Youth Ministries or Director of Children's Ministries.
 - f. In the event that FUMC of Saline transports C,Y,VA by bus, adults must be dispersed throughout the bus.
2. Permission Slips
 - a. A Youth Ministries general activity form will be on file for each youth for each C,Y, and VA who attends local youth activities. An activity specific permission slip will be necessary for all activities that take place at least fifty miles from FUMC of Saline. An activity specific permission slip will be necessary for all Friendship Ministry activities that take place off the campus of FUMC of Saline.

- b. A completed Health History Record Form and Medical/Dental Consent Form for each C,Y,VA will be carried by a provider while at all off-campus activities.
- c. C,Y,VA will be encouraged to take home an extra permission slip in the event that they want to invite a friend to an activity.

3. Overnight Activities

- a. Males and females will sleep in separate rooms. In the event that there is only one room allotted for our church group, males and females will sleep at opposite ends of the room. If it is deemed necessary for adults to share sleeping accommodations with C,Y,VA, a minimum of two adults, the same sex as the C,Y,VA, shall sleep in each area.
- b. Director of Youth Ministry will ask for specific accommodations that follow the Safe Sanctuaries guidelines when making reservations for ministry events. However, if those accommodations are unavailable, the Director of Youth Ministry will use his/her best judgment in determining sleeping arrangements.

4. Chaperone Ratios

- a. Chaperone ratios for off-site activities will meet at least the same criteria as for onsite activities.

Screening Levels

LEVEL 1

Provide care on a short-term basis such as Sunday morning programs or during other programs during the week.

This person will meet informally with the staff member responsible for that ministry

LEVEL 2

Work with C, Y, or VA on a regular basis

This person will meet formally with the staff person responsible for that ministry to define roles and responsibilities

LEVEL 3

Work with C, Y, and VA for more than 2 hours, away from the church campus, or in an overnight setting in or away from the campus of FUMC of Saline

This person will meet in a formal interview with the staff member responsible for that

ministry. This interview will be held at the discretion of the ministry director if the volunteer has worked with the program for longer than six months.

****All persons who work with C, Y, and VA must attend the Safe Sanctuaries training. This training will be required every three years with inservices provided as needed.**

****All persons who work with C, Y, and VA must fill out and have on record a Volunteer Form. This form will be updated annually by the provider.**

****A police background and sex offender registry check (with the signed consent of the provider) will be required for all persons working with C, Y, and VA.**

Provider Qualifications

The following qualifications will be used for determining if an applicant can be a provider with FUMC of Saline ministries involving C, Y, and VA.

1. No one shall be permitted to serve as a provider or leader who may represent a significant risk of committing abuse or neglect, or violating any part of this policy.
2. No one shall serve as a provider if he/she is known to have been previously convicted of or pled guilty to any crime arising out of any act or conduct involving sexual abuse, or any act of conduct which is of a sexual, molesting, seductive, or criminally deviant nature, whether or not such conduct involved a child. This includes, but is not limited to, crimes involving pedophilic behavior, incest, rape, assaults involving children, youth, or vulnerable adults, murder, kidnapping, pornography, sexual harassment, and the physical or sexual abuse of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult. This qualifying rule shall be applicable no matter how long ago the crime occurred.
3. No one shall serve as a provider who has had a verdict rendered against him or her in any civil action out of any personal act or conduct related to sexual abuse, sexual harassment or physical abuse of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult. This qualifying rule shall apply no matter how long ago the civil verdict was rendered.
4. No one shall serve as a provider who has participated as a perpetrator in any previous act of sexual abuse, sexual harassment or physical abuse of a child, youth, or vulnerable adult. This qualifying rule shall apply no matter how long ago this occurred or whether a civil or criminal verdict was rendered.

Reporting Suspected Abuse

The procedure to be followed for reporting suspected abuse will be part of the Safe Sanctuaries training that is mandatory for all staff and volunteers providers who will work with C, Y, and VA.