

A RESOURCE PACKET

for Creating Safe Sanctuaries Guidelines for Your Church



Developed by:

The Child Protection Policy Group
East Ohio Conference
The United Methodist Church, 1999

Updated by:

The Safe Sanctuary Task Group, 2015

2015

To each United Methodist Church in The East Ohio Conference:

Dear Friends:

“People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.” Mark 10:13-16 (NIV)

The East Ohio Conference strives to provide “Safe Sanctuary” for all God’s children. We are seeking ways to improve and better implement “Safe Sanctuary” procedures to protect our children, youth and adults in order to make our congregations a safe place where everyone may experience the abiding love of God and fellowship within the community of faith. This includes children’s check in/out procedures, training and background checks for those working with children and youth, and procedures that guide the interaction of children, youth and adults.

In response to guidelines set by the 1996 General Conference of The United Methodist Church, the East Ohio Conference bishop and cabinet appointed a task group to develop guidelines and a sample policy for reducing the risk of child abuse in the local church.

The task group’s goal was to create a sample which could be used as a framework by all churches in the conference to develop their own policy and procedures. The task group used the collective experience of the group and resources of the conference, other conferences, and several local churches to develop the sample while working with the conference attorneys and insurance companies, as well as children service agencies, and national experts on the subject of reducing the risk of child abuse in the church.

In 2015, the Conference Education Committee developed a task group and charged them with updating the sample guidelines. The following materials are the fruit of their work.

Enclosed you will find these sample guidelines, as well as resource materials, to help you develop a policy and guidelines for your local church. This sample was written to be used as a resource by a wide range of churches. Options are included to help you tailor the sample to your own situation. *It is very important that you carefully consider the special circumstances of your local church and prayerfully consider the issues of safety and protection as you develop your own policy and procedures.* Consultation with the leaders of your ministries with vulnerable persons is instrumental for success in reducing the risk. *It is essential that you develop a policy and supporting guidelines that can and will be followed.* After developing your policy, please have it reviewed by your own attorney and insurance agency.

“Currently, no congregation can afford, either financially, ethically, or morally, to fail to implement strategies for the reduction and prevention of child sexual abuse. We, as Christians, are not called to discontinue our congregation’s ministries with children and youth. We are called to engage in these ministries with great

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rejoicing and with the knowledge that we are making every effort to provide ministry to our children and youth in ways that assure their safety while they grow in faith.” (*Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church*, Joy Thornburg Melton, Discipleship Resources, Nashville, TN. p. 21)

In Christ’s Love,

The Child Protection Task Group, 1999

The Safe Sanctuaries Task Group, 2015

SAFE SANCTUARY POLICY

This cover sheet was designed to provide a resource of key persons which could be helpful in reporting a suspected incident. This information should be readily available and updated regularly.

Name of Church: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Emergency Phone Numbers:

Pastor Name and Phone Number: _____

Other Church Leaders Name and Phone Number: _____

Other Church Leaders Name and Phone Number: _____

Other Church Leaders Name and Phone Number: _____

Name, Address, Phone Number of District Superintendent: _____

Name, Address, Phone Number of Church Attorney: _____

Name, Address, Phone Number of Church Insurance Agent: _____

County Children Services Phone Number: _____

County Department of Human Services Phone Number: _____

Local Law Enforcement Agency Phone Number: _____

Designated Media Spokesperson: _____

SAFE SANCTUARY POLICY

(Name of Church)
 (Name of City), OH
 Adopted _____, 20____

INTRODUCTION

“People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.” Mark 10:13-16 (NIV)

Our church strives to provide “Safe Sanctuary” for all God’s children. We are seeking ways to improve and better implement “Safe Sanctuary” guidelines to protect our children, youth and adults in order to make our congregation a safe place where everyone may experience the abiding love of God and fellowship within the community of faith. This includes children’s check in/out procedures, training and background checks for those working with children and youth, and procedures that guide the interaction of children, youth and adults.

As much as we do not like to think about abusive and hurtful things happening in the church, it is clear that it is our duty as the Church to guard and protect the children, youth, adults, church staff, and volunteers who participate in our ministries.

The General Conference of The United Methodist Church, in April 1996, adopted a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of child sexual abuse in the church. The adopted resolution includes the following statement:

Our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection to the little ones, the children. The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church state that “...children must be protected from economic, physical and sexual exploitation, and abuse.”

Tragically, churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, exploitation and ritual abuse occur in churches, both large and small, urban and rural. The problem cuts across all economic, cultural and racial lines. It is real, and it appears to be increasing. Most annual conferences can cite specific incidents of child sexual abuse and exploitation in their churches. Virtually every congregation has among its members adult survivors of early sexual trauma.

Such incidents are devastating to all who are involved: the child, the family, the local church and its leaders. Increasingly, churches are torn apart by the legal, emotional, and monetary consequences of litigation following allegations of abuse.

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God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from sexual and ritual abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong. (From *The Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church - 1996*. [pp. 384-386])

Thus, in covenant with all United Methodist congregations, we adopt this policy for the prevention of child abuse in our annual conference.

PURPOSE

Our congregation's purpose for establishing this Safe Sanctuaries policy and the accompanying guidelines is to demonstrate our strong and unwavering commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all of our children, youth and adults.

STATEMENT OF COVENANT

Therefore, as a Christian community of faith and a United Methodist congregation, we pledge to engage in the ministry of the Gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of all of our children, youth and adults, as well as all of the workers with children, youth and adults. We will follow reasonable safety measures in the selection and recruitment of workers. We will implement prudent operational procedures in our programs and events. We will educate all of our workers with children, youth and adults regarding the use of appropriate policies and methods. We will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected incident of abuse that conforms to the requirements of state law. We will be prepared to respond to media inquiries in the event that an incident occurs.

CONCLUSION

In all of our ministries with children, youth and adults, this congregation is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each person will be "...surrounded by steadfast love...established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal." (Baptismal Covenant II, *United Methodist Hymnal*, p. 44)

SAFE SANCTUARY GUIDELINES

(Name of Church)
 (Name of City), OH
 Adopted _____, 20__

DEFINITIONS

Abuse – The infliction of physical pain or injury or the willful deprivation of services necessary to maintain mental and physical health, by a caregiver or other person.

Adult - a person at least 18 years of age and at least 5 years older than those being supervised.

Caregiver – An individual who has responsibility for the care of a vulnerable person as a result of a family relationship, or who has assumed that responsibility voluntarily, by contract, or as a result of the ties of friendship.

Child or Minor - a person under 18 years of age.

Child Abuse - consists of any of the following:

1. Engaging in any sexual activity with a child as defined under Chapter 2907 of the Ohio Revised Code; or
2. Endangering a child, as defined under Section 2919.22 of the Ohio Revised Code**; or
3. Denial, as means of punishment, of proper or necessary subsistence, education, medical care, or other care necessary to a child for the child’s health; or
4. Use of restraint procedures on a child that cause injury or pain; or
5. Administration of prescription drugs to a child without the written approval and ongoing supervision of a licensed physician; or
6. Providing alcoholic beverages or controlled substances to a child; or
7. Commission of any intentional act that results in any injury or death to a child; or
8. Infliction of physical or mental injury that threatens to harm a child’s health, welfare, or safety.

** in its present form, this law defines “child endangerment” to include any of the following: (1) abuse; or (2) torture or cruel abuse; or (3) corporal punishment or other physical discipline (e.g. such as spankings) or prolonged cruel restraint, which is excessive under the circumstances, and which could likely physically injure the child; or (4) repeated, uncalled-for discipline which, if continued, would seriously impair the child’s mental health or development; or (5) involving the child in any obscene, sexually-oriented, or nudity-oriented activity or conduct.

Emotional Abuse – The intentional or reckless infliction of emotional or mental anguish, or the use of a physical or chemical restraint, medication or isolation as punishment or as a substitute for treatment or care of any vulnerable person.

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Exploitation – The expenditure, diminution, or use of the property, assets or resources of a vulnerable person without the express voluntary consent of that person or his or her legally-authorized representative.

Financial Exploitation – The use of deception, intimidation, undue influence, force or threat of force to obtain or exert unauthorized control over a vulnerable person’s property, with the intent to deprive the vulnerable person of that property.

Neglect – The failure of a caregiver or other person to provide food, shelter, clothing, medical services, medication or health care for a vulnerable person.

Ritual Abuse – regular intentional physical, sexual, or psychological violations of a vulnerable person to appeal to a higher authority of power

Staff Person – Any person employed by the church.

Volunteer – A person eighteen (18) years of age or older who assists in conducting activities for vulnerable persons.

Vulnerable Person– Any child or youth, as well as any adult whose behavior indicates that he or she is mentally or emotionally incapable of adequately caring for himself or herself and his or her interests without adverse consequences to himself or herself or others, or who, because of physical or mental impairment, is unable to protect himself or herself from abuse, neglect, exploitation, sexual abuse, or emotional abuse by others.

Safe Sanctuary - a policy and guidelines developed to protect our vulnerable persons in order to make our congregation a safe place where everyone may experience the abiding love of God and fellowship within the community of faith. This includes children’s check in/out procedures, training and background checks for those working with vulnerable persons, and procedures that guide the interaction of children, youth and adults.

SELECTION AND SCREENING

In an effort to create a safe environment within our church, volunteers working with vulnerable persons and all paid staff will be screened and will be trained on safe sanctuaries guidelines.

Current or new staff person should:

- receive a written job description
- complete a confidential application form with 3 reference checks including former employees. All references will be checked.
- complete a background check consent form
- receive appropriate clearances of all background checks
- undergo a personal interview
- attend yearly safe sanctuary training
- renew a background check every 3 years

It is important that the policy and guidelines you adopt are followed. This document is offered as a guideline from which to work. Consult with your church attorney and insurance carrier as to what policy, guidelines, and exceptions apply at your church.

Regular, Occasional, and Last minute volunteers should:

- complete a confidential application form
- provide 3 references. All references will be checked.
- complete a background check consent form
- attend yearly safe sanctuary training
- receive appropriate clearances on all background checks
- participate in an interview if one of the following indications is present:
 - the person wants to work alone
 - the person has indicated that they have been charged with a crime against children or youth. (persons who may pose a threat, have been previously convicted, plead guilty or no contest to a crime against vulnerable persons will not be placed in a position involving access to vulnerable persons).
 - upon checking references or completion of the background check, issues are raised which require clarification.
- complete an Annual Renewal Application each year

All records, forms and reports will become a part of the employee's confidential personnel file. All volunteers records, forms and reports will be kept on confidential file by the Safe Sanctuary Administrator at the local church.

SUPERVISION OF VULNERABLE PERSONS

Two-Adult Rule – Two non-related adult workers will be present with vulnerable persons during church-related activities whenever possible except in emergency situations.

Rule of Three – For the times when the Two-Adult Rule cannot be supported, at least three individuals (at least one being an adult) will be present with vulnerable persons during church-related activities. An adult supervisor acting as a “premises monitor” will make unannounced visits frequently, particularly when the two-adult rule is not feasible, and will patrol hallways and common areas within the church facility when vulnerable persons activities are taking place.

Rest Room Guidelines – When using the restroom, vulnerable persons will be accompanied by an adult to and from the restroom. Before any vulnerable person enters the restroom, the adult will enter the restroom to make sure that it is safe. If assistance is required, the adult will assist the individual with the door propped open so that a second screened adult can visually monitor the assisting adult. It is recommended that two adults be present when assistance will be required in the restroom. When restrooms are directly accessible to vulnerable persons where activities are taking place and not accessible to the general public, vulnerable persons can be allowed to utilize the restroom alone. (The Brotherhood Mutual resource *Guidelines for Ministry Workers* suggests that only females assist small children in the restroom).

Five Year Rule – All persons working with minors must be at least five years older than the age group they are leading/supervising.

Six Month Rule - Any volunteers working with children must be a member or regular attender at church for at least six months.

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Suggested Adult to Child Ratios

- a) 1:5 under the age of 5
- b) 1:8 for children aged 5 - 18

Windows/Open Doors -All rooms where vulnerable persons are meeting will have windows (in doors or walls), half doors or open doors for all teaching/learning activities.

Sign-in/Sign-Out Procedures - Persons responsible for children who are infants through third grade will sign in their child and indicate the pre-authorized person(s) to whom the child may be signed out for both Sunday school and other children's activities. No child should ever be left unattended.

Attendance & Record Retention – All activities including vulnerable persons should have a written record of the names of participants, including the leaders/supervisors. Records should be kept for a minimum of three years.

Overnight Activities

1. Hotel Setting: No adults in the bed with a child. If possible, choose hotels with rooms opening to inside hallway.
2. Bunkroom Setting: At least 2 same gender adults may sleep in a large room with multiple bunk beds.
3. Off-site trips information exchange:
 - a. Parent must receive contact info to include:
 - i. start/stop times
 - ii. location of event
 - iii. program content
 - iv. lodging information
 - v. covenant rules expected of their child
 - b. Staff/volunteer/drivers must receive:
 - i. all contact information for parents
 - ii. signed parent/guardian permission/liability form
 - iii. health/emergency information

Transportation:

1. Driver must be known to the designated leader of the event;
2. Driver must be at least 21 years old;
3. Driver must have a valid state driver's license for the vehicle being operated;
4. Driver must have proof of insurance;
5. Driver must be accompanied by at least two children or youth; and
6. Driver must have read and signed an acknowledgment form indicating that the policy has been read and will be followed. (See forms)

Outside Groups Meeting in Your Church Facilities

It is recommended that the local church's board of trustees/Safe Sanctuary team require that all outside organizations review, and agree to comply with all of the church's safe sanctuary policy.

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Social Media and Technology

Given the increased use of technology and social media in the life of the church and its individual members, faith communities have a responsibility to define social media policies that uphold the covenant to create Safe Sanctuaries for vulnerable persons. To this end, following are guidelines for the use of social media, technology and the internet:

- We will protect the privacy and identity of all vulnerable persons in online writings, postings and discussions.
 - Volunteers and staff must not post photos or video that identifies vulnerable persons by name, address, or other specific identification on any online site or printed publication without written consent from a parent or legal guardian.
 - All social media groups (Facebook, etc.) associated with preschool, children’s or youth ministry areas should be designated as “closed” groups, requiring all those who wish to gain access to be approved by the group’s administrator(s).
 - All church-related social media groups (Facebook, etc.) and pages must have at least two administrators. If an administrator is no longer associated with the ministry, that individual's administrative status must be revoked.
 - Photos of vulnerable persons may only be published or posted on social media (Facebook, etc.) after a photo release has been signed by their parent/guardian. It is suggested that all permission slips contain a statement that approval to participate in the event includes approval for photographs to be used in church-related media. Photos used in other mediums, such as church newsletters, websites, blogs, twitter pics, etc., must not include any identifying information of minors without permission.
 - Photos may only be posted to the social media (Facebook, etc.) page by page administrators. Adults (staff, volunteers, parents, etc.) should not identify minors in photographs posted online or in print. Individuals (including minors) are welcome to identify (i.e. “tag”) themselves.
 - When checking in on Foursquare, Facebook, or any location tagging social media, only “checkin” yourself. Never check in minors. Be sensitive to tagging or revealing other participants’ location without their expressed permission. Rather, create a hashtag to facilitate conversation.
 - In the case of clergy/professional staff and church member online connections, friend requests, follow requests, circle requests, etc. should be initiated by the church member, especially if the church member is a vulnerable person.
- We will maintain appropriate relational boundaries with minors.
 - No adult shall initiate social media (Facebook, etc.) contact with or “friend” a vulnerable person. When accepting the “friend” requests of a vulnerable person, care should be taken to respect the ministry and discipleship work of the local faith community to which they belong. Any conversations on Social Media with vulnerable persons shall occur in open channels, or with multiple parties present in the conversation thread.
 - When emailing, texting, tweeting, posting or messaging a vulnerable person, adults should copy another adult (ideally a parent or guardian) on the message, or post it in a public venue (i.e. a Facebook wall as opposed to a private message). This will allow adults to maintain the “two adults present” Safe Sanctuaries standard when using social media. Platforms promising discrete conversations and secrecy (SnapChat, FacebookPoke, etc.) should be avoided.

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- Social media, even though it offers convenient and private channels, is not an appropriate medium for counseling - especially with vulnerable persons. Begin or transition a pastoral conversation into an appropriate Safe Sanctuary model (i.e. office with windows, two adult rule, etc.).
- We shall not engage in, encourage or condone cyber-bullying. Every children's ministry and youth ministry group, and adult volunteer training session is encouraged to include in its teaching a session on the types and consequences of cyber-bullying, including how to identify it and how to report it.
- We shall educate our congregation in the effective and safe use of social media and technology to live out their Christian witness in what they write, post, share, and view.
 - We all must understand, and teach to vulnerable persons, that once something is posted on web, sent via email or sent via text, it is impossible to fully recover or erase it. There should be no expectation of privacy or reasonable expectation that the information stops with the person for whom it was intended. The promises of *privacy* offered by apps (like SnapChat) are illusionary.
 - *A good rule of thumb:* If you don't want it posted on the church sign, website, or bulletin, do not text it or post it via social media.

RESPONSE TO INJURIES AND ACCIDENTS

In order to assure proper attention was given to any injury or accident, an incident report must be completed by the adult supervisor as soon as is practical, and always within 24 hours of the incident whenever a vulnerable person is injured.

RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

As caring Christians, we are committed to protect and advocate for vulnerable persons participating in the life of the church. We seek to provide a supportive atmosphere, offering both objectivity and empathy as we seek to create a climate in which healing can take place. It is our legal and moral responsibility to report suspected abuse whenever it comes to our attention regardless of where that abuse takes place.

Be prepared to do the following:

PLEASE NOTE: MANY STEPS SHOULD BE DONE SIMULTANEOUSLY

- Secure any needed emergency medical help and address any needs the person may have. This may include calling 911 when needed.
- **IMMEDIATELY** notify the proper authorities (children services board, the county department of human services exercising the children services function, or a local law enforcement agency in the county in which the children/youth resides or in which the suspected abuse occurred). This is a requirement of the law. Reference section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code. Do not attempt an investigation. This should be left to the professionals who are familiar with these cases.
- Simultaneously notify the parents or legal guardian of the victim and take whatever steps are necessary to assure the safety of the children/youth until the parent(s) or legal guardian arrives. It is important to emphasize that the proper authorities must be notified even if the parent(s) or legal guardian do not wish the incident to be reported.
- Note: if one or both of the parents or legal guardian is the alleged abuser, contact the proper authorities. Follow their advice about notification of the parents.

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- Take any allegations seriously and reach out to the victim and the victim’s family. Showing care and support help to prevent further hurt. Extend whatever pastoral resources are needed. Remember that the care and safety of the victim is the first priority. Respond in a positive and supportive manner to the alleged victim and the victim’s family.
- After having reported the suspected abuse to the proper authorities, the incident is to be reported immediately to the church’s attorney, the church’s insurance company, and the district superintendent. Do not try to handle this without professional assistance. If the accused is a clergy member of the annual conference, local pastor, or diaconal minister, provisions of Paragraph 363 and Paragraphs 2701-2719 of *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church 2012* must be followed.
- A written report of the basic information shall be kept to ensure on-going ministry to, and advocacy for, victims and others involved. Use the “Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse” form for this report. The report shall be brief and contain only factual information relevant to the situation. It shall be filed in a secure place in order to ensure confidentiality. It shall be written in ink or typed to prevent it from being changed. The report shall be filed in the church office where it shall remain confidential.
- Immediately, yet with dignity and respect for the sacred worth of the accused, remove the accused from further involvement with vulnerable persons.
- Once the proper authorities have been contacted and the safety of the vulnerable person is secured, the pastor or other designated person may tell the accused that a report has been made. If the accused is a volunteer or paid staff of the church, that person shall be temporarily relieved of his or her duties until the investigation is finished. If the accused is a paid staff person of the church, arrangements should be made to either maintain or suspend his or her income until the allegations are cleared or substantiated.
- Any contact with the media should be handled by the Communications Department as part of the Crisis Response Plan (in cooperation and coordination with the Director of Connectional Ministries). Care will be taken to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all involved. The spokesperson should generally convey that the matter is under investigation and any comments would be premature.

TRAINING OF PERSONS WHO WORK WITH VULNERABLE PERSONS

The church shall provide regularly scheduled training focused on issues of child protection for those working with children and youth. Attendance at this training or a district or conference sponsored training session shall be required of all adults and youth helpers who will have direct contact with vulnerable persons in the church’s ministry.

The training may include:

1. The definition and recognition of abuse
2. The church’s policies on reporting abuse and appropriate forms.
3. The purposes of the policy as protection for children/youth and for church staff/volunteer workers.
4. The meaning and importance of confidentiality.
5. The maintenance of a positive learning classroom environment, including appropriate discipline and age-level characteristics.
6. The appropriate behavior for teachers and leaders.

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**APPLICATION TO WORK/VOLUNTEER
WITH VULNERABLE PERSONS**

All portions of this application are to be completed by all persons (volunteer or compensated) who desire to work with vulnerable persons in our church's ministries. This application form is being used to help the church provide a safe and secure environment for those vulnerable persons who participate in our programs.

PERSONAL

Date: _____

Name: _____
Last First Middle

Former Name (if applicable): _____
Last First Middle

Present address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____

Home Phone (_____) _____ Cell Phone (_____) _____

How long have you lived at the above address? _____ E-mail address: _____

If less than one year, provide all previous addresses for the past five years.

Please indicate the type of youth or children's work you prefer. _____

Please indicate the date you would be available to begin. _____

What is the minimum length of commitment you can make? _____

Why would you like to volunteer as a worker with vulnerable persons? How are you called to this ministry? _____

List any gifts, callings, training, education, or other factors that have prepared you for working with vulnerable persons:

At _____ UMC, we believe that it is important for volunteers who are nurturing the faith foundation of others to also be nurturing their personal faith development.

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How would you describe your desire to grow in your faith and your spiritual practices? _____

Would you be available for periodic volunteer training sessions? Yes _____ No _____

Our church has an open door policy which means that a parent, volunteer, or church staff member can visit/observe at any time. Are you comfortable with this atmosphere? _____

Our church encourages the use of two teachers/leaders for all vulnerable persons activities. Are you comfortable with team teaching? _____

Have you ever been charged with, convicted of, pleaded guilty to, or no contest to a crime against children or other persons?

_____ Yes _____ No (If yes, please explain – attach a separate page, if necessary)

Have you ever participated in or been accused of any act of abuse or sexual misconduct against a vulnerable person?

_____ Yes _____ No (If yes, please explain – attach a separate page, if necessary)

Are you aware of any traits or tendencies you possess that could pose a threat to vulnerable persons?

_____ Yes _____ No (If yes, please explain – attach a separate page, if necessary)

CHURCH HISTORY AND PRIOR YOUTH WORK

How long have you been attending this United Methodist Church? _____

Name of church of which you are a member: _____

List (names and address) of other churches you have attended regularly during the past five years:

List all previous church work involving youth (list each church’s name and address, type of work performed, and dates): _____

List all previous non-church work involving youth (list each organization’s name and address, type of work performed, and dates): _____

_____ UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
AUTHORIZATION AND REQUEST FOR CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK

I, _____, hereby authorize _____ Church to request the background screening entity to release information regarding any record of convictions contained in its file, or in any criminal file maintained on me, whether said file is a local, state, or national file, and including but not limited to accusations and convictions for crimes committed against minors or vulnerable adults, to the fullest extent permitted by state and federal law. I do release said church and background screening entity from all liability that may result from any such disclosure made in response to this request.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Print applicant's full name: _____

Print all other names that have been used by applicant (if any): _____

Date of birth: _____ Place of birth: _____

Social Security number (if required): _____

Driver's license number: _____ State issuing license: _____ License expiration date: _____

Request sent to (agency/law enforcement department):

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

**This is a sample form. Your congregation may prefer to conduct the criminal background checks on Applicants through one of the numerous companies that now provide this service.*

It is important that the policy and guidelines you adopt are followed. This document is offered as a guideline from which to work. Consult with your church attorney and insurance carrier as to what policy, guidelines, and exceptions apply at your church.

_____ UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

SAFE SANCTUARIES PARTICIPATION COVENANT STATEMENT

The congregation of _____ Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all vulnerable persons and volunteers who participate in ministries and activities sponsored by the church. The following policy statements reflect our congregation's commitment to preserving this church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who would enter and as a place in which all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others.

1. No adult who has been convicted of abuse of any vulnerable person (either sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, or financial exploitation) should volunteer to work with vulnerable persons in any church-sponsored activity.
2. All adult volunteers involved with vulnerable persons of our church must have been members of the congregation for at least six months before beginning a volunteer assignment.
3. Adult volunteers with vulnerable persons shall observe the "Two-Adult Rule" and "Rule of Three" at all times so that no adult is ever alone with vulnerable persons.
4. Adult volunteers with vulnerable persons shall attend regular training and educational events provided by the church to keep volunteers informed of church policies and state laws regarding abuse.
5. Adult volunteers shall immediately report to their supervisor any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.

Please answer each of the following questions:

1. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to observe and abide by all church policies regarding working in ministries with vulnerable persons?
 Yes No
2. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to observe the "Two-Adult Rule" and "Rule of Three" at all times?
 Yes No
3. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to abide by the six-month rule before beginning a volunteer assignment?
 Yes No
4. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to participate in training and education events provided by the church related to your volunteer assignment?
 Yes No
5. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to promptly report abusive or inappropriate behavior to your supervisor?
 Yes No
6. As a volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to inform a minister of this congregation if you have ever been convicted of abuse?
 Yes No

I have read this **Participation Covenant**, and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth above.

Signature of Applicant _____

Date _____

Print full name _____

It is important that the policy and guidelines you adopt are followed. This document is offered as a guideline from which to work. Consult with your church attorney and insurance carrier as to what policy, guidelines, and exceptions apply at your church.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**REFERENCES**

Please list three persons who are familiar with your character, particularly as it relates to supervision of children or youth. Include the pastor of the church most recently attended. None of the references may be a relative. References will be checked.

1. _____
Name Relationship

Address

Home Phone Cell Phone

2. _____
Name Relationship

Address

Home Phone Cell Phone

3. _____
Name Relationship

Address

Home Phone Cell Phone

**ANNUAL RENEWAL APPLICATION FORM FOR PERSONS
WHO HAVE PREVIOUSLY BEEN SCREENED
TO WORK/VOLUNTEER WITH VULNERABLE PERSONS**

This application is to be completed by all persons (volunteers or paid) who desire to work with vulnerable persons in our ministries *and* who have been previously screened and accepted for work with vulnerable persons by our church.

PERSONAL

Date _____

Name _____
Last First Middle

Former Name (if applicable) _____

Present Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home phone _____ Cell phone _____ Work phone _____

Have you ever been charged with, convicted of, or plead guilty or no contest to a crime against vulnerable persons or other persons? NO YES , If yes, please explain-attach a separate page if necessary.

Have you been screened and accepted by your local church to work with vulnerable persons ? YES NO

Have you ever participated in or been accused of any act of child abuse or sexual misconduct against a vulnerable person? YES NO If yes, please explain _____

Name, address and phone of your local church _____
_____ How long have you been a member? _____

REAFFIRMATION OF APPLICANT'S AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE

The information contained in the application is correct and complete to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references or churches listed in this application to give you any information (including opinions) that they may have regarding my character and fitness for work with vulnerable persons. In consideration of the receipt and evaluation of this application by _____ United Methodist Church, I hereby release any individual, church, youth organization, charity, employer, reference, or any other person or organization, including record custodians, both collectively and individually, from any and all liability for damages of whatever kind or nature which may at any time result to me, or my heirs, or family on account of compliance or any attempts to comply with this authorization.

Should my application be accepted, I agree to abide by the _____ United Methodist Church Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Procedures and live by the understanding that, as a person in authority, it is my responsibility to avoid inappropriate behavior with any vulnerable person in my care.

I further state that **I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THE FOREGOING AUTHORIZATION AND RELEASE AND KNOW THE CONTENTS THEREOF AND I SIGN IT AS MY OWN FREE ACT.** This is a legally binding agreement which I have read and understand.

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

It is important that the policy and guidelines you adopt are followed. This document is offered as a guideline from which to work. Consult with your church attorney and insurance carrier as to what policy, guidelines, and exceptions apply at your church.

_____ **UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**
INCIDENT REPORT

This form is to be completed by the adult supervisor whenever an incident (for example: injury, accident, etc.) occurs. A copy is then to be given to the child's parent/guardian and the pastor. The church must also keep a copy of the completed form.

Name of class or activity: _____ Adult supervisor: _____

Name of injured child: _____ Birthdate of child: _____ Age: _____

Parents/Legal Guardian: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: (_____) _____ Cell Phone: (_____) _____

Date and time of incident: _____

Description of incident:

1. Describe the incident (use back of page if necessary).
2. Where in the facility or elsewhere did the incident occur?
3. What area of the child/youth's body was injured?
4. What was the child/youth doing when the incident happened?
5. How did the incident happen?
6. Give the names of adults supervising the child/youth at the time of the incident.
7. Give the name(s) of any other witnesses to the incident.
8. How did the child/youth respond after the incident?
9. Was first aid given or some other action taken? Yes _____ No _____

If yes by whom?

Describe:

10. Who notified the parent and when?

Signature of person completing the form: _____

Date: _____

_____ UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
REPORT OF ALLEGED ABUSE
(Please complete in ink or type)

This form is to be completed by the person who observed the suspected abuse or to whom the suspected abuse was disclosed.

Name of accused: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: (_____) _____ Cell Phone: (_____) _____

Name of victim: _____ Age: _____

Parents/Legal Guardian: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: (_____) _____ Cell Phone: (_____) _____

Nature of abuse: _____

Site/location: _____

Date(s) if possible: _____ Time(s): _____

Date on which this information was given: _____

When was Children Services or the local law enforcement agency contacted? _____

Who contacted Children Services or the local law enforcement agency? _____

Who has received this information? _____

Name of person completing this form: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Other factual information which will be helpful:

Place in a secure file in the church office. The church must also file a copy of this form with the bishop's office of the East Ohio Conference where it will be placed in a secure file.

_____ **UMC CHILDREN'S INFORMATION FORM**

(Birth through Grade 5)

Effective Dates: _____ to _____

Name of Child _____ Grade _____

Parent/Guardian's Name(s) _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone/Cell: _____ Birthdate: _____ Age: _____

Additional contact person & phone # _____

Where will you be during activity (worship, Sunday school class, small group, etc.) and what is the best way to contact you (cell phone, text, etc.)? _____

Who has permission to pick up your child? _____

Child's allergies:

Child's special needs:

Medical insurance company _____ Policy # _____

Choice of hospital: _____

_____ **has** my permission to participate in the following activities sponsored by
(NAME OF STUDENT)
_____ United Methodist Church (hereinafter referred to as the "Church").

___ Sunday School ___ Wednesday Night ___ Children's Choir ___ Nursery ___ Childcare during church functions Other: _____

It is important that the policy and guidelines you adopt are followed. This document is offered as a guideline from which to work. Consult with your church attorney and insurance carrier as to what policy, guidelines, and exceptions apply at your church.

This consent form gives permission to seek whatever medical attention is deemed necessary, and releases the church and its staff of any liability against personal losses of named child.

I/We the undersigned have legal custody of the student named above, a minor, and have given our consent for him/her to attend events being organized by the church. I/We understand that there are inherent risks involved in any ministry or athletic event, and I/we hereby release the church, its pastors, employees, agents, and volunteer workers from any and all liability for any injury, loss, or damage to person or property that may occur during the course of my/our child's involvement. In the event that he/she is injured and requires the attention of a doctor, I/we consent to any reasonable medical treatment as deemed necessary by a licensed physician. In the event treatment is required from a physician and/or hospital personnel designated by the church, I/we agree to hold such person free and harmless of any claims, demands, or suits for damages arising from the giving of such consent. I/We also acknowledge that we will be ultimately responsible for the cost of any medical care should the cost of that medical care not be reimbursed by the health insurance provider. Further, I/we affirm that the health insurance information provided above is accurate at this date and will, to the best of my/our knowledge, still be in force for the student named above.

Parent/guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Occasionally, _____ UMC uses photographs/videos of children/youth in publicity such as newspapers, newsletters, brochures, etc. and on the church websites. **No last names will be used on the internet.** Please check one of the options below and sign underneath:

I give permission for _____ UMC to use my child's picture/video in public materials.

Please do not include my child's picture/video in any publicity.

Parent/guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

**UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
YOUTH MEDICAL RELEASE & PERMISSION FORM**

Effective dates: _____ to _____

Student Information

Name _____ Male Female Home phone _____ Cell _____
 Address _____ City _____ Zip _____ Birthdate _____
 Grade this school year _____ School _____ Child/Youth Email _____
 Check here to give _____ UMC staff permission to use social media or email/text this child/youth regarding program activities.
 Mother's name _____ Home phone _____ Cell _____ Work _____
 Email _____
 Father's name _____ Home phone _____ Cell _____ Work _____
 Email _____
 Emergency contact 1 _____ Home phone _____ Cell _____ Work _____
 Emergency contact 2 _____ Home phone _____ Cell _____ Work _____
 Medical insurance company _____ Policy # _____
 Physician _____ Office phone _____
 Dentist _____ Office phone _____
 Hospital of preference _____

Medical History

1. Student is permitted to take Tylenol Aspirin Advil for headache
2. Student allergic to _____
3. Is student subject to motion sickness? _____ If yes, is student permitted to take Dramamine or other (please list) motion sickness medication? _____
4. Any other health concerns that the staff needs to be aware of? _____
5. Food restrictions: _____
6. Drugs and dosage currently taken _____
7. Date of last tetanus shot: _____
8. Please list and explain any major illnesses the child experienced during the last year: _____
9. Should this child's activities be restricted for any reason? Please explain: _____

Activities may include, but are not limited to: cookouts, boating, water skiing, swimming, basketball, roller skating, rollerblading, games in the park, soccer, broomball, ice skating, volleyball, softball, baseball, camping, downhill skiing, snowboarding, hiking, biking, concerts, Bible studies, golfing, miniature golf, hayrides. **Note: If you desire to limit your child's participation in any event, please submit your wishes in writing to the church prior to that event.**

It is important that the policy and guidelines you adopt are followed. This document is offered as a guideline from which to work. Consult with your church attorney and insurance carrier as to what policy, guidelines, and exceptions apply at your church.

Code of Conduct – for the Student

For your information, we expect each student to conform to these rules of conduct

- No possession or use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco
- No fighting, weapons, fireworks, lighters, or explosives
- No offensive or immodest clothing
- No boys in girls' sleeping quarters and no girls in boys' sleeping quarters
- Respect property
- Respect one another, staff, and adult leaders
- Respect and comply with event schedules
- Staying with the group is expected
- Cell phones must stay OFF and OUT OF SIGHT during all youth functions.

Students who fail to comply with these expectations may be sent home at their parents' expense.

I, the student, have read the rules of conduct, the above evaluation of my health, and permission to participate in youth group activities. I agree to abide by the stated personal limitations and code of conduct.

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

Parental Consent

_____ has my permission to attend all children/youth activities sponsored by _____
(NAME OF STUDENT)

United Methodist Church (hereinafter referred to as the "church") from _____ through _____.

This consent form gives permission to seek whatever medical attention is deemed necessary, and releases the Church and its staff of any liability against personal losses of named child.

I/We the undersigned have legal custody of the student named above, a minor, and have given our consent for him/her to attend events being organized by the church. I/We understand that there are inherent risks involved in any ministry or athletic event, and I/we hereby release the church, its pastors, employees, agents, and volunteer workers from any and all liability for any injury, loss, or damage to person or property that may occur during the course of my/our child's involvement. In the event that he/she is injured and requires the attention of a doctor, I/we consent to any reasonable medical treatment as deemed necessary by a licensed physician. In the event treatment is required from a physician and/or hospital personnel designated by the church, I/we agree to hold such person free and harmless of any claims, demands, or suits for damages arising from the giving of such consent. I/We also acknowledge that we will be ultimately responsible for the cost of any medical care should the cost of that medical care not be reimbursed by the health insurance provider. Further, I/we affirm that the health insurance information provided above is accurate at this date and will, to the best of my/our knowledge, still be in force for the student named above. I/we also agree to bring my/our child home at my/our own expense should they become ill or if deemed necessary by the student ministries staff member.

Parent/guardian signature: _____ Date: _____

Occasionally, _____ UMC uses photographs of children/youth in print publicity such as newspapers, newsletters, brochures, etc. and on the church website. **No last names will be used on the internet.** Please check one of the options below and sign underneath:

___ I give permission for _____ UMC to use my child's picture in public materials.

___ Please do not include my child's picture in any publicity.

Parent/guardian signature: _____ Date: _____

It is important that the policy and guidelines you adopt are followed. This document is offered as a guideline from which to work. Consult with your church attorney and insurance carrier as to what policy, guidelines, and exceptions apply at your church.

_____ UMC EVENT-SPECIFIC PERMISSION FORM

(Items in italics to be completed by ministry leaders for each event hosted by the ministry under their oversight).

Event: _____
Location name & address

Date of Event: _____ Time of Event: _____
Include starting time & time of return .

What to bring:

Names & Phone Numbers of Leaders in Charge:

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Name: _____ Phone: _____

Return Bottom Portion to Church Group Leader/Event Coordinator.

I give permission for my child, _____, to attend

_____ with _____ United Methodist Church
Name of event

_____ On _____ .
Name of church group/ministry *date of event*

Telephone #'s where I can be reached while my child is attending this event:

Cell Number: _____

Other Number: _____

I give permission for my child, _____, to be transported

To _____ by _____ .
Location *approved event leader/event transporter*

I have completed and submitted a 20__ – 20__ _____ UMC Medical Release & Permission Form to the church group leader/event coordinator: yes _____ no _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

It is important that the policy and guidelines you adopt are followed. This document is offered as a guideline from which to work. Consult with your church attorney and insurance carrier as to what policy, guidelines, and exceptions apply at your church.

_____ UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
SAFE SANCTUARIES
INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

Goals of the interview:

1. Work from and complete the application form and fill in any gaps in the application form.
2. Open opportunities for further discussion on the part of the applicant.
3. Observe how applicant conducts self in the process.
4. Keep a written record of applicant's responses to the interview questions.

In conducting an interview, the interviewer should be aware when "red flags" are raised concerning the applicant. These "flags" are indicators of issues which must be explored further to be assured that all information is collected concerning a prospective employee/volunteer. Some of the "flags" may include:

- **Many addresses or churches attended over a short period of time.**
This could indicate that a person is trying to be anonymous. It could also indicate that he/she is/was a college student who moved a lot to maintain low rent.
- **Wants to work with only one age group.**
If someone would like to work with only one specific age group, it could indicate that person has targeted that age group for molestation. It could mean that is the age group for which he/she is trained, and experience has shown that he/she does not work well with other ages. Be aware of those who seem overly committed to one age group. For example, someone who simultaneously leads a scout troop, coaches Little League, serves as a Big Brother and now wants to teach Sunday school may be neglecting his/her own age-appropriate peer relationships in order to cultivate potential victims.
- **Does not want/need/like close supervision.**
The interview may indicate that the person does not like to be closely supervised. This might raise questions about motivation for applying for this work.

Interviewers need to be able to explore issues as they arise during the interview and depart from the set of prepared questions to do so. It is helpful, therefore, if interviewers prepare ahead of time for the interview by:

1. Reading the application
2. Noting areas for exploration

Sample Interview Questions:

1. Why are you interested in being associated with our church?
2. How would you describe yourself?
3. When you heard about this position, what appealed to you the most?
4. What specific skills do you bring to this position?
5. With what age group and gender do you prefer to work? Why? Please give examples of your work with this age group.

It is important that the policy and guidelines you adopt are followed. This document is offered as a guideline from which to work. Consult with your church attorney and insurance carrier as to what policy, guidelines, and exceptions apply at your church.

6. If you are trained for a certain age group, are you willing to work with other age groups or gender?
7. What kind of programs or activities would you be willing to lead, supervise, or conduct? If trained, would you be willing to conduct other activities?
8. What do you feel are chief indicators of a successful program or activity?
9. Give a specific example of how you overcame a difficulty in job, school, or family.
10. Give an example of how you overcame a problem with a youngster other than your own. How were you disciplined as a child? How would/do you discipline?
11. Under what supervision style do you work best?
12. In what types of activities or recreation do you participate?
13. What were your favorite subjects in school?
14. What would you like to tell us that hasn't been covered?
15. What questions do you have about our congregation?
16. Other questions to raise regarding information given on the information form?

One might conclude the interview with one or two hypothetical situations which are typical and then ask the applicant how he/she would respond in that situation.

_____ UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

SAFE SANCTUARIES

WRITTEN RECORD OF CONTACT WITH A REFERENCE OF AN APPLICANT FOR WORK WITH VULNERABLE PERSONS

(Complete one form for each reference contacted)

CONFIDENTIAL

1. Name of applicant: _____

2. Individual, church, or organization contacted (if a church or organization, identify both the church or organization and minister or person contacted). _____

3. Date(s) and time(s) of contact(s): _____

4. Person contacting the reference: _____

5. Method of contact (e.g. telephone, personal conversation, letter/e-mail [please attach]):

6. Summary of conversation (summarize the reference's remarks concerning the applicant's fitness and suitability for work with vulnerable persons).

Signature: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

It is important that the policy and guidelines you adopt are followed. This document is offered as a guideline from which to work. Consult with your church attorney and insurance carrier as to what policy, guidelines, and exceptions apply at your church.

SAFE SANCTUARY RESOURCES

HOW TO GET STARTED

Present a proposal showing the need to form a task force to do further research on this issue to your administrative board, council or staff parish. This governing board should accept the responsibility of choosing members for this task force. Because this could be a time consuming responsibility, an existing committee should not be asked to develop your church's policy and procedures.

The members of this task force could include the pastor, a representative from your pastor/staff parish, trustees and education committees, and other persons who work with the vulnerable persons in your church. This task force will need to meet regularly in an ongoing basis to update the policy and guidelines as needed.

Safety and protection are very important issues, many people within your congregation may not be aware of the need to develop and update a policy and supporting procedures for your church. Some educating of individuals and the congregation as a whole is usually needed. There are many resources to assist you in this educational process. The Safe Sanctuary Task Group especially recommends *Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church* by Joy Thornburg Melton, *Safe Sanctuaries: The Church Responds to Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation of Older Adults* by Joy Thornburg Melton, and *Safe Sanctuaries in a Virtual World* by Joy Thornburg Melton and Michelle Foster.

IMPLEMENTATION OUTLINE

The purpose of the task force should be to:

- educate yourselves on the issues of the abuse of vulnerable persons and their protection
- evaluate the current practices of your church related to the care and supervision of vulnerable persons
- become advocates for why a Safe Sanctuaries policy and procedures are needed at your church
- continue educating the congregation for the need for a policy and procedures
- develop a proposed policy and procedures for your church after studying the enclosed sample and other resources
- review your proposed policy and procedures with affected parties -- education committee, teachers, youth leaders, paid and volunteer staff, an attorney, your insurance carrier, trustees, etc., and make any necessary revisions
- present the policy and procedures to your administrative board or council or other governing board for approval
- request that the governing board choose an implementation individual or committee who will administer the policy, assess its effectiveness, and raise awareness of the need to make any revisions of the policy and procedures as needed
- set a time table for your work

REDUCING THE RISK OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IN THE CHURCH

Jesus said, "Whoever welcomes [a] child . . . welcomes me" (Matthew 18:5). Children are our present and our future, our hope, our teachers, our inspiration. They are full participants in the life of the church and in the realm of God.

Jesus also said, "If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones . . . it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matthew 18:6). Our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection to the little ones, the children. The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church state that "children must be protected from economic, physical, emotional and sexual exploitation and abuse" (§ 162C).

Tragically, churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, exploitation, and ritual abuse occur in churches, both large and small, urban and rural. The problem cuts across all economic, cultural, and racial lines. It is real, and it appears to be increasing. Most annual conferences can cite specific incidents of child sexual abuse and exploitation within churches. Virtually every congregation has among its members adult survivors of early sexual trauma.

Such incidents are devastating to all who are involved: the child, the family, the local church, and its leaders. Increasingly, churches are torn apart by the legal, emotional, and monetary consequences of litigation following allegations of abuse.

1. "Ritual abuse" refers to abusive acts committed as part of ceremonies or rites; ritual abusers are often related to cults, or pretend to be.
2. God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from sexual and ritual abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong. In response to this church-wide challenge, the following steps should be taken to reduce the risk of child sexual abuse:

A. Local churches should:

1. develop and implement an ongoing education plan for the congregation and its leaders on the reality of child abuse, risk factors leading to child abuse, and strategies for prevention;
2. adopt screening procedures (use of application forms, interviews, reference checks, background clearance, and so forth) for workers (paid and unpaid) directly or indirectly involved in the care of children and youth;
3. develop and implement safety procedures for church activities such as having two or more nonrelated adults present in classroom or activity; leaving doors open and installing half-doors or windows in doors or halls; providing hall monitors; instituting sign-in and sign-out procedures for children ages ten or younger; and so forth;
4. advise children and young persons of an agency or a person outside as well as within the local church whom they can contact for advice and help if they have suffered abuse;
5. carry liability insurance that includes sexual abuse coverage;
6. assist the development of awareness and self-protection skills for children and youth through special curriculum and activities; and
7. be familiar with annual conference and other church policies regarding clergy sexual misconduct.

It is important that the policy and guidelines you adopt are followed. This document is offered as a guideline from which to work. Consult with your church attorney and insurance carrier as to what policy, guidelines, and exceptions apply at your church.

B. Annual conferences should:

1. develop safety and risk-reducing policies and procedures for conference-sponsored events such as camps, retreats, youth gatherings, childcare at conference events, mission trips, and so forth; and
2. develop guidelines and training processes for use by church leaders who carry responsibility for prevention of child abuse in local churches. Both sets of policies shall be developed by a task force appointed by the cabinet in cooperation with appropriate conference agencies. These policies shall be approved by the annual conference and assigned to a conference agency for implementation. It is suggested that the policies be circulated in conference publications and shared with lay professionals and clergy at district or conference seminars.

C. The General Board of Discipleship and the General Board of Global Ministries should:

1. cooperatively develop and/or identify and promote the following resources;
2. sample policies, procedures, forms, and so forth for reducing the risk of sexual abuse and exploitation of children and youth in local churches, both in relation to their own sponsored programs and to any outreach ministries or other programs for children or youth that use church space;
3. child abuse prevention curriculum for use in local churches;
4. training opportunities and other educational resources on child sexual abuse and exploitation and on ritual abuse; and
5. resources on healing for those who have experienced childhood sexual trauma.

ADOPTED 1996

readopted 2004 and 2008

resolution #3084, 2008 Book of Resolutions

resolution #65, 2004 Book of Resolutions

resolution #59, 2000 Book of Resolutions

See Social Principles, ¶ 162C.

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