

**FIRST BROAD STREET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Subject: Safe Sanctuaries	
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I. Safe Sanctuaries Policy

God calls us to make our Church a safe place, protecting our children and other vulnerable people from sexual and other forms of abuse. God calls us to create a community of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong.

First Broad Street's purpose for establishing this Safe Sanctuaries Policy and Procedure is to demonstrate our absolute and unwavering commitment to the physical safety and spiritual growth of all our children, youth and adults.

Therefore, as a Christian community of faith and a United Methodist congregation, we pledge to conduct the ministries of the gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of all of our children, youth and adults as well as all 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 all 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; and we will be prepared to respond to media inquiries if an incident occurs.

II. Recruitment, Screening and Selection of Workers

The following forms are included in First Broad Street's recruitment/screening/selection process for volunteer and hired workers with children and youth:

- ◆ Position Descriptions (These will be prepared by the Director in each area and will have a common format.)
- ◆ Volunteer Application Form (See Appendix A)
- ◆ Consent to Criminal Background Check Form (See Appendix B)
- ◆ Participation Covenant Statement (See Appendix C)

With the implementation of this Policy and Procedure, all current and future volunteer and hired workers with children and youth will be required to complete the Volunteer Application Form, the Consent to Criminal Background Form, the Participation Covenant Statement as well as receive Safe Sanctuary Training.

All of these forms and records will be maintained in a locked, fire proof file cabinet by the Business Administrator. Any criminal background check information that raises concerns of the Business Administrator will be discussed with the Senior Minister and the Minister of Education/Programs and appropriate action will be taken. It is the intent of this Policy and Procedure that any actions will err on the side of protecting our children and youth.

All paid staff and volunteers must complete appropriate Safe Sanctuary refresher training on an annual basis with in-depth training at least every three years. For a volunteer to accept a role with lead responsibility, he/she must be a member of the Church for six months. However, they can serve in a support role prior to this. All new staff must complete training within two weeks of employment. This training will be documented and records of this training will be kept by the Minister of Education/Programs.

Effective January 1, 2005, First Broad Street United Methodist Church will utilize *TRAC-1 Technology* to conduct criminal and sexual offender searches on all volunteers working with children and youth that have not been approved prior to this date. Persons who have completed the Safe Sanctuary process prior to January 1, 2005, will be grandfathered provided that all forms have been completed and are on file in the Business Administrator's office. *TRAC-1 Technology* will be used to conduct criminal and sexual offender searches on all staff members.

III. Procedures and Rules for Working with Children and Youth

The following rules should be a part of the prevention strategy in the implementation of the Safe Sanctuary policy for FBSUMC:

The Two Adult Rule

As a matter of safety for both the student and the adult it is required that no fewer than two adults be present at all times for any church sponsored program, event, or ministry involving children or youth. This is inclusive of the nursery area. For the purpose of this rule married couples working with the same age group are considered one adult, Volunteers and paid workers under the age of eighteen are not considered adults.

The Eighteen-Age Limit Rule

Persons hired to work as fully responsible staff in the Nursery, Child Care Center, Youth or any other program areas of the church must be at least eighteen years of age. Any person serving as a paid helper should be at least sixteen years of age and must work under adult staff supervision at all times.

The Five-Year Rule

It is required that any worker, youth or adult, volunteer or paid, be at least five years older than the group they are to work with. Volunteers must be at least fourteen years of age. For example, if a junior (20-21) in college is recruited to work with youth as a "leader" they must be at least five years older than the group they are to lead.

The Two-Driver Rule

It is required that there be two drivers in church-owned vehicles transporting children or youth for any church-sponsored event, program, or ministry.

Advance Notice Rule

Ministry with children and youth shall always give a parent or guardian advance notice and full information regarding the event(s) in which their children will participate. A parent or guardian must give written permission for their child's participation.

State Reporting Rule

All workers with children and youth are required by law to report any suspected cases of child abuse to the proper authorities. FBSUMC will use the Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse form (See Appendix E) to capture the necessary information regarding allegations of abuse. This procedure will be covered in more detail in Section IV.

IV. Implementation of the Safe Sanctuaries Policies and Procedures

The following procedures will be used as a part of the strategy in the implementation of the Safe Sanctuary Policy for FBSUMC:

1. There will be regular training for hired and volunteer workers, and staff regarding the Safe Sanctuary procedures. Parents of youth and children should receive a brief statement of the policy, along with guidelines as a part of the visitation packets or when they join the Church.

The training should include information regarding the Church's policies for

- a. The prevention of abuse,
- b. Procedures to be used in all ministries with children, youth and the fragile,
- c. Appropriate steps to report an incident of abuse,
- d. Details of the state laws regarding specific age level abuse.

After initial training session, volunteers and staff may renew Participation Covenant for two years with review of Safe Sanctuaries' renewal PowerPoint presentation without repeating the in-depth training session.

2. There shall be First Aid/CPR/AED training offered or provided on an annual basis for all Church workers with children and youth and available for all other Church Staff and workers as well as parents. A first aid kit will be maintained on each floor of the Education Wing and in the main Church Office.
3. When there is an accident of any type that involves a child or youth, the lead person should complete the Accident Report Form (See Appendix E). This Accident Report Form should be completed when there is an accident resulting in an injury or the accident has the potential for resulting in a serious injury. An accident review should be convened by the Minister of Education/Programs as soon after the accident as possible. The review

should focus on developing steps that would prevent the accident from reoccurring. The Accident Report Form and the minutes from the Accident Review meeting should be filed with the Business Administrator.

4. There should be windows on all classroom doors where children or youth are actively in class. If the door does not have a window the door should remain open while the room is in use. In the event of counseling or one on one session with youth or children, there should be an "open door" policy established. There should also be another staff or volunteer in the vicinity even if they are not within actual listening distance.
5. At no point in time should a youth or child be in a staff member or volunteer's home without a non-family member adult present regardless of the nature of the church-sponsored event, program or ministry
6. There should be an adult supervising the hallways during major use periods on the Children's floors.
7. There should always be clear understanding of the appropriate setting for any ministry format; i.e., camp ministry would take place in or around a camp, travel ministry would require travel, study ministries would be held at the Church or at other locations as designed and outlined in advance (see the advance notice rule).
8. Reporting procedures and the plan of action in the event of an allegation, procedures and rules for implementation of the Safe Sanctuary policy (See Section V) should be reviewed on an annual basis.

V. Plan for Responding to Allegations of Abuse

Every volunteer and paid worker with children and youth must be trained to know Tennessee's requirements for reporting abuse to law enforcement authorities and child protection services. With any incident at the Church, the Kingsport Police Department at 246-9111 and the Tennessee Department of Children Services at 877-542-2873 shall be notified. If an alleged incident of abuse happens away from the Church but involves Church activities, then the incident must be reported in that jurisdiction. If a volunteer or staff member suspects abuse of a child or youth in a non-church situation, they are also obligated to report the alleged incident to the appropriate authorities.

Immediately following the notification of City and State authorities of an allegation of abuse, an appropriate First Broad Street Church authority selected from the list below shall also be notified. A Committee will be immediately convened to investigate the allegation. The Committee will be composed of the following people:

Senior Pastor
Business Administrator
Minister of Education/Programs
Julie Bennett, Attorney
Lay Leader

The Committee will not wait for a time when everyone can be present, but will initiate its meeting as soon after the alleged incident as is possible, but no more than 24 hours after the initial report.

The Committee will first assure the alleged abuser has been removed from contact with the alleged child or youth victim. The Committee will next assure that all reporting requirements have been met. The Committee will take action to gather all necessary information regarding the incident, but will take all necessary precautions to not interfere with any official investigation.

The Senior Pastor or his/her designee will serve as a spokesperson for our Church in dealing with the congregation, the media and the public. In his/her absence, the Minister of Education/Programs or the Business Administrator will serve as the spokesperson. We will always protect the rights of the victim and the accused.

With guidance from a legal professional, the Senior Pastor shall initiate appropriate ministries and actions over a long period to enable healing by all effected people.