



Child and Youth Safety Procedures as part of the Safe Sanctuary Policy

The purpose of this procedure is to make Fuquay-Varina United Methodist Church a safe place for all children, staff and volunteers.

I. Definitions

- A. Children and Youth:** Persons in age from birth through 17. 18-year-olds are considered adults.
- B. Child Abuse or Neglect:** At a minimum, any recent act or failure to act resulting in imminent risk of serious harm, death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation by a parent or caretaker who is responsible for the child's welfare. (The *minimum* definition given in the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act.)
1. Sexual abuse: Rape; or the employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any child to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct.
 2. Physical Abuse: Non-accidental physical injury or patterns of injury to the child or any action that results in a physical impairment of the child.
 3. Emotional Abuse: Expressing attitudes or behaviors toward a child that create serious injury or psychological damage to the emotional stability of the child.
 4. Neglect: Any serious disregard for a juvenile's supervision, care, or discipline on the part of the parent, guardian, custodian or caretaker.
- C. Staff member:** Any adult, paid or unpaid, working in a supervisory capacity with children/youth.
- D. Church-sponsored Activities.** Any activity within a ministry conducted under the auspices of and/or endorsed by FVUMC that primarily involves children or youth 17 years old and younger.
- E. Outside Groups.** Any group whose activity primarily involving children or youth 17 years old and younger that does not fall under the responsibility of a FVUMC age-level director and/or coordinator. Each outside group, including those currently using FVUMC facilities, will be known to the church by completion of the Trustees' revised Building Use Application Form, which will be secured in the church office files.



II. Activity Supervision

- A. 'Two-Staff Rule':** Requires that no fewer than two staff members be present at all times in the supervising of children and youth during a program or event. In the event that multiple Bible studies, programs, and/or Sunday school classes have only one staff member present or two persons related to each other, there must be another staff person who will monitor the activity; for example, by looking in on or entering each room.
- B. 'Five-Year Rule':** In the event that a young adult (18 or older) wishes to volunteer with the youth program (ages 11-17), the volunteer must be at least 5 years older than the oldest youth in the group.
- C. 'No Supervisors under the Age of Eighteen Rule'**
1. Paid and unpaid staff and volunteers serving with children/youth will be at least 18 years of age unless directly supervised by an adult at least 23 years of age.
 2. If someone under 18 would like to volunteer, there will be an unrelated staff member present with him or her.
- D. Classroom Door Windows:** Classroom windows will have full visual access. Room decorations will not cover or obstruct window openings.
- E. Identification**
1. All staff members will wear identifying name badges.
 2. Names and photographs of minors will not be displayed together in public spaces, such as door fronts or bulletin boards.
- F. Special Events:**
1. Parents and/or guardians will be notified at least one week prior to any off-site activities in which the child would leave the Church property.
 2. "Parental Consent" and "Emergency Procedure Forms" must be completed, signed, and kept on file.
 3. Forms must be kept in the leaders' possession during all trips and events.
 4. In the event of an overnight trip, special accommodations must be made. The trip information form must be filled out and kept on file in the church office and approved by designated staff.
 5. All trips will be supervised by a designated program director, who may be either a paid or volunteer staff person serving as the director of the event.
- G. Transportation:**
1. All drivers transporting a child/youth during an activity must have a valid driver's license and current automobile insurance coverage.
 2. Two unrelated staff members shall be in the front seats of each church-owned or rented vehicle transporting children/youth. Youth (ages 11-17) may be transported within the Raleigh area by one adult.
 3. When church vans are utilized, drivers must be at least 25 years of age. They must submit a copy of a current driver's license to the designated church staff member at least two weeks prior to event in order to be processed and approved by the church's insurance company.
 4. Children under 8 years of age or less than 80 lbs must be properly secured in a car seat, as mandated by NC state regulations.

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III. Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers: When an allegation of child abuse is made against a staff member, volunteer or another child, the “Crisis Response Plan” will be followed.

IV. Safety

A. Incidents

1. All injuries will be report to the Event director or Program area Coordinator.
2. All injuries should be documented on an “Incident Report Form” and placed in an Incident Report binder kept in the church office. The blank forms are located in the office.
3. Parents will be made aware of any injury a child receives while in the care of the church.
4. Parents will need to sign off on the “Incident Report” form

V. Discipline

A. Defined: Discipline is guiding the behavior of young children in order to teach self-control and the necessary language skills for the child to resolve problems independently.

B. Overview

1. Discipline procedures should emphasize positive techniques.
2. Children are not to be treated in a punitive manner.
3. Fuquay-Varina UMC does NOT endorse physical (corporal) punishment.