Why implement a plan to prevent abuse?

Child abuse prevention and ministry protection policies and procedures are essential for every congregation, not only for the protection and safety of our children, but also for our volunteers and employed workers with children.

REDUCE THE RISK
KNOW THE FACTS
DEVELOP A PLAN
CREATE A SAFE SANCTUARY
LOVE WINS

Get involved!

724.776.2300  |  wpaumc.org/safesanctuaries
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The Mandate and Pennsylvania’s New Law

In 1996, the General Conference of the United Methodist Church first adopted a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of child sexual abuse and protecting vulnerable adults.

Resolution 3084 in the 2012 Book of Resolutions states, “God calls us to make our churches safe places, protection children and other vulnerable persons from sexual and ritual abuses.” The resolution sets specific steps to be taken by churches, conferences and agencies to reduce the risk of 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,” says Joy Thornburg Melton in her book Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Abuse in the Church for Children and Youth.

The Bible calls us to care for those who can’t care for themselves. Look at Mark 9:36-37 when Jesus says, “Anyone who welcomes a little child like this on my behalf welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes not only me but also my Father who sent me.”

This year, Pennsylvania enacted new legislation which hold volunteers and paid employees to an even higher standard than the United Methodist Church has previously.

Each congregation needs to develop a policy/procedure for the protection of all children, youth and vulnerable adults.
Consider This:

Jesus said, “If 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 18:5

Why is Safe Sanctuaries needed?

1. __________ mandate
2. __________ mandate
3. __________ mandate
4. __________ mandate

Statistics

Three million reported abuse cases a year; 8,219 a day; 342 per hour; 8 per minute; 1 every 15 seconds.

Rates

By age 18, one in every 3 girls and one in every seven boys is sexually abused.

Definitions

Children are ________________.
Youth are ________________.

Vulnerable Adults are defined as 1.) ________________
2.) ________________
DEFINING ABUSE

Abusers are not easily recognized—they may look just like you or me! Abusers are people who have greater power in relation to a child, and they use that power to harm a child. --Melton

_________abuse in which a person deliberately and intentionally causes bodily harm to a child.

Look for...

- Hostile and aggressive behavior towards others
- Fearfulness of parents and/or other adults
- Destructive behavior towards self, others and/or property
- Burns, facial injuries, pattern of repetitious bruises

_________abuse in which a person endangers a child’s health, safety or welfare through negligence.

Look for...

- Failure to thrive
- Pattern of inappropriate dress for climate
- Begs or steals food; chronic hunger
- Depression
- Untreated medical conditions
- Poor hygiene

_________abuse in which sexual contact between a child and an adult (or older more powerful youth) occurs.

Look for...

- Unusual advanced sexual knowledge and/or behavior
- Depression—cries for no apparent reason
- Promiscuous behavior
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Bruised/bleeding in vaginal or anal areas
- Exhibits frequent headaches, stomach aches, extreme fatigue
- STDs
- Unusual nervousness/anxiety at being left at nursery/Sunday school class
- Reluctance to participate in church activities once enthusiastically approached
- Comments such as “I don’t want to be left alone with____”
- Nightmares, hostility towards childcare teacher/workers

_________abuse in which physical, sexual or psychological violations of a child are inflicted regularly, intentionally and in a stylized way by a person (s) responsible for the child’s welfare.

Look for...

- Disruptions of memory or consciousness
- Unexplained mistrust and mood swings
- Flashbacks
- Eating Disorders
- Fear of the dark, especially at sundown or full moon
- Fear of ministers, priests or others wearing robes/uniforms

_________abuse in which a person exposes a child to spoken and/or unspoken violence or emotional cruelty.

Look for...

- Exhibits severe depression and/or withdrawl
- Exhibits severe lack of self-esteem
- Failure to thrive
- Speech and/or eating disorders
- Goes to extremes to seek parental approval

The Seven Foundations of a Safe Sanctuary

1. At least _______________ _______________ in classroom who are not related or cohabitating.

**As of January 1, 2015, ALL VOLUNTEERS HAVING CONTACT WITH CHILDREN shall have a.) Act 33-PA Childline Clearance and 2.) Act 34-PA State Police Criminal background check. If a volunteer has not been a Pennsylvania resident for 10 years, then they also need FBI Criminal Background check. PA Law states these clearances must be updated every five years.

2. All doors to classrooms, offices, and supply closets should have __________ in the doors.

3. No person in authority should be less than __________. Remember the five year guideline!

4. For activities or ministries for children/youth/vulnerable adults, there should be ___________ and ___________ procedure.

5. ______________ rule for new attenders.

6. ______________ and ______________ checks for both volunteers and employees.

7. Understand who has to ________________ and why.

Best Practices!

Websites for Check-in Procedures

Kidcheck.com
Excellerate.com
Lambslist.com
MinistryTracker.com
ChildrensChurchCheckIn.com

PA LAW UPDATES

As of January 1, 2015 all paid staff having contact with children/youth shall have the following three clearances:

1. Act 33-Pa Childline Clearance
2. Act 34--PA State Police Criminal background check
3. FBI Record Check

The Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) specifies that any individual who comes into contact with children in the course of their volunteer work or professional practice is a mandated reporter.

Effective December 31, 2014, these people are considered mandated reporters under Pennsylvania law:

- Clergy of any regularly established church or other religious organization;
- An individual--paid or unpaid--who, on the basis of the individual’s role as an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity or service, accepts responsibility for a child e.g. Sunday School teacher, VBS leader, youth worker, etc.

A mandated reporter must contact Childline at 1-800-932-0313 directly if abuse is suspected.
Keep in Mind....

Travel Issues

1. Church-owned Vehicles
   - Screening & training of drivers
   - Proper Insurance
   - Two-adult rule

2. Personal Vehicles
   - Two-adult rule exception:
     - Caravan-style driving
     - Youth driving other youth
     - Youth driving themselves

Overnight Issues

- Never share a bed with a child
- Never be alone in a room with a child
- Adults must be of the same gender as the students they are chaperoning

Hotel Setting

- Adults should never be in a room with just one child
- Doors should open to a hallway
- Adjoining rooms are best

Cabin Setting

Two adults in a large room with multiple bunk beds

Potty Policy

- Diapering in an open, visible area
- Supervised independence--let them ask
- Complete privacy--unless an emergency; get parents if needed
- Check the bathroom first!

The Obvious

- Never counsel the opposite sex behind closed doors
- Never visit children/youth alone at home
- Watch your language, dress, ATF activities