SAFE SANCTUARIES®

Legal Forum 2017
Presenter: RaNae Street, Director of Discipleship Resources
Covenant Relationships with God and a Faith Community

• Luke 2:1-39
• Luke 2:41-52
• Luke 18:15-17
In the fear of the LORD [is] strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge.

Proverbs 14:26
Startling Facts

• There are over three million incident reports of child abuse and neglect in the United States every year.
• At least 1,490 deaths are attributed to child abuse and/or neglect each year.
• One out of every three girls is sexually abused before the age of 18.
• One out of every seven boys has been sexually abused before he reaches the age of 18.
• Over 75% of victims trust or are dependent on their abuser.
• Most abusers have more than one victim.
Does Abuse Happen in the Church?
History of Safe Sanctuaries

• The 1996 General Conference of The United Methodist Church adopted a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of abuse in the church.

• In 2014, West Ohio Annual Conference passed a resolution requiring each congregation and worshipping community to establish a policy and update annually.
History of Safe Sanctuaries

- In 2016, West Ohio Conference Safe Sanctuaries Task Force was charged with revising the Safe Sanctuaries Standards of the Conference.

- In 2017, the West Ohio Annual Conference presented a Safe Sanctuaries Policy with recommended practices and procedures.
The intent of our West Ohio Conference Safe Sanctuaries Policy is to:

- Prevent abuse from happening in our churches
- Create places where children, youth, and vulnerable adults can feel safe disclosing abuse; and
- Protect the loyal volunteers and employees who minister to our children, youth, and vulnerable adults.
Safe Sanctuaries Today

• As of June 2017, All West Ohio Conference churches and worshipping communities are responsible for their Safe Sanctuary Policy including:
  • Writing
  • Implementing
  • Training
  • Submitting
  • Reviewing annually
Policy Recommendations for Local Churches and Congregations

• Introduction

• Statement of Covenant

• Definitions

• Recommended Practices and Procedures:
  • Screening
  • Supervision
  • Reporting
  • Response Plan
Safe Sanctuaries Today

• The Safe Sanctuaries Task Force provides supporting documents, forms, and resources designed to assist churches and provide guidance with specific ministry opportunities

• www.westohioumc.org/conference/safe-sanctuaries
Getting Started and Implementation

Step 1. Research

Step 2: Develop a team

Step 3: Conduct a church and congregation assessment

Step 4: Gather resources

Step 5: Know your legal responsibility

Step 6: Write or update your church’s Safe Sanctuaries policy

Step 7: Utilize community agencies and resources

Step 8: Train all staff and volunteers annually

Step 9: Celebrate your commitment
Questions? Answers.
West Ohio Conference

Resources

• Volunteer Forms
  • Volunteer Application
  • Volunteer Reference
  • Volunteer Training Log

• Parental Consent Forms
  • Family Registration
  • Field Trip
  • Routine Trip
  • Photo Release

• Mission Teams
  • Safe Sanctuaries for Mission Teams
  • Team Leader Check List
  • SAMPLE Mission Journey Itinerary
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Resources

• Communication Forms
  • Recommended Guidelines for the Use of Social Media and Electronic Communications for West Ohio Local Churches and their Leaders, Staff and Volunteers
  • Incident/Injury/Illness Report
  • West Ohio Conference Photo Release
  • Crisis Communications
  • Quick Sheet: What To Do When A Crisis Occurs

• Reporting
  • Steps to Report Abuse Flow Chart
  • Report of Suspected Incident of Abuse
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Resources

• Obtaining a Background Check
  • State of Ohio Criminal Records
  • National Criminal Records
  • FBI Sex Offender Registry

• Ohio State Laws
  • Ohio Amended Senate Bill 187
  • Ohio Revised Code RC 109.572
West Ohio Conference Resources

- Background and Criminal Records Screening Companies
  - Accufax Background Screening
  - First Advantage Criminal Background Company
  - LexisNexis
  - PeopleSmart
  - Protect My Ministry Church Background Checks
  - Safe Gatherings
  - Shepherd's Watch Background Checks
  - Trak-1 Technology
  - Validity Screening Solutions
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Resources

- Getting Started & Implementation Forms
  - Safe Sanctuaries Self Evaluation
  - How to Begin Developing and Updating a Safe Sanctuaries Policy
  - Implementation and Annual Review plus Annual Training Log
  - Minimum Required Insurance Levels

- Facility Usage Guidelines
  - Church Mutual
  - Guide One
  - United Methodist Insurance
  - Brotherhood Mutual
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Contact

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Additional Resources

• Discipleship Ministries, www.umcdiscipleship.com, 877-899-2780

• For Their Sake Handbook: A Staff Training Handbook About Child Abuse Awareness by Becca Cowan Johnson

• Many Churches Neglect to Screen Those Working with Children and Youth by The Barna Group
SAFE SANCTUARIES
Reducing the Risk of Abuse in the Church for Children and Youth
Joy Thornbury Melton

SAFE SANCTUARIES for Children and Youth
Reducing the Risk of Abuse in the Church

SAFE Sanctuaries for Ministers
Reducing the Risk of Abuse in the Church
Joy Thornbury Melton

Safe Sanctuaries
The Church Responds to Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation of Older Adults
Joy Thornbury Melton
Foreword by Richard H. Gentsler, Jr., DMin

Safe Sanctuaries in a Virtual World
Joy Thornbury Melton and Michelle L. Foster