

Safe Sanctuaries for Children and Youth Basic Essential Guidelines

Huntersville United Methodist Church
Huntersville, NC

1. Three references and nationwide criminal records **MUST** be checked for ALL people, both paid staff and/or volunteers, who supervise children and youth. Only those who have completed the nationwide criminal background check process will be allowed unsupervised access to our children. In addition a written application for both volunteer and paid staff will need to be submitted.
2. Two (unrelated) adults must be in the room or vehicle at all times. No child or youth should be alone with one adult at any time.
3. Staff and volunteers should be at least 5 years older than the oldest child/youth being supervised.
4. No one under the age of 18 will care for infants or have supervisory responsibilities with children of any age. However, youth under the age of 18 may assist a screened adult in caring for children who are toddlers and older.
5. Every room that is used for activities and teaching of children and youth should have a window in the door, or a half door, that gives visibility to all areas of that room. The window must be left uncovered. If there is no window, the door must be left open at all times.
6. Pastoral counseling is expected to be confidential in nature, but it is for the protection of both parties that such sessions take place where other people are nearby even though not within hearing distance. Therefore, the pastor's study door has a small glass window in it.
7. In the event where there are not two adults in the classroom, you must have a roving superintendent or monitor during the meeting or teaching time, and the door must be left open.
8. A person must be an active part of our church family for a minimum of 6 (six) months prior to applying for a position in children or youth ministries on a volunteer basis.
9. At least one adult present at every church activity should be certified in basic first aid and CPR. HUMC offers training annually.
10. In cases where a child is injured, no matter how minor the injury might be, the adult in charge should complete an Accident Report Form. Procedures for completing this form and the forms themselves are kept in each child's Sunday school classroom and a master copy is kept in the main church office. This form should be signed by both the adult in charge at the time of the incident and the parent of the child who was injured. A copy of this report should be given to the parent for their records and HUMC will keep the original on file.
11. In the event an HUMC staff person or volunteer receives a report of, observes, or is in any way aware of a possible incident of abuse involving a minor (a person under the age of 18) they must report it to the senior pastor or a church staff member as soon as they possibly can (within 24 hours). The senior pastor will assist in documenting the incident by using our Report of Suspected Incident of Youth Abuse form and all necessary actions will be taken to assure the safety of the child in question.
12. HUMC parents will always be kept abreast of the programs their children or youth are involved in, and be given advance notice and information regarding any activity which deviates from the traditional classroom instruction offered at the church during Sunday school, UMYF, Vacation Bible School, or other regular activities at the church. Permission forms with medical information will accompany children/youth for any activity involving travel or extreme sports activity. Have a "Safe Sanctuary" training time for the parents and family of your children and youth, with copies of the guidelines for your church available.
13. HUMC will examine the safety and appropriateness of the equipment in our nursery, classrooms, youth room, and playground and make any changes necessary to assure the safety of our children.
14. HUMC will maintain adequate liability insurance coverage, including coverage for sexual misconduct, for all activities of the church family, both on and off church property
15. HUMC will have a designated spokesperson in case of an incident or allegation of abuse. All persons other than the designated spokesperson must refrain from speaking to the press in such cases.