



Safe Sanctuary

**First Methodist Church
Forney, TX**

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WHY Safe Sanctuary?

Our calling and our mandate is:

- To ensure safe sanctuary for all God's people.
- To prevent the occurrence or even the *appearance of abuse*.
- To protect workers from false accusations and/or suspicions.



Safe Sanctuary Applies to:

- Any event on or off campus which occurs in the name of First UMC-Forney including:
 - Sporting Events
 - Field Trips
 - Mission Activities
 - Sunday School Parties
 - Etc.

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Safe Sanctuary Contacts:

Your two main contacts from the
Safe Sanctuary Executive Committee include:

Amy Madrid, Children's Pastor and Director of
PDO and Preschool

Jeremiah Meadows, Youth Pastor



What Is Abuse?

PHYSICAL/EMOTIONAL ABUSE:

Any act of omission or an act that endangers a person's physical or mental health



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Physical & Emotional Abuse Includes:

- Failure to prevent injury/harm.
- Controlled substance misuse (by the adult or by the youth/child).
- Mental or emotional injury directed to a child/youth.
- Allowing a child/youth to be in a situation resulting in mental/emotional injury.



What Is Sexual Abuse?

The sexual exploitation or use of same for the satisfaction of sexual drives.

- Examples: incest, rape, prostitution, romantic involvement with a child/youth, any sexual contact with a participant, displaying sexual material, suggestive comments or contact, and more.



Important to Remember

With abuse it's not just what you do . . .
it also includes what you don't do.

- Not stepping in to stop an abusive action or situation is also abuse!
- You must be proactive to prevent abuse or situations that might lead to abuse.



Who Must Go Through Safe Sanctuary?

- **All employees of First Methodist Forney**
- **Any volunteer coming into direct contact with children or youth**

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What Is The Certification Process?

- Complete an application and give permission to do a background check.
- Turn in 2-3 references.
- Complete a training session.
- Upon completion of the above and receiving a satisfactory background check, the individual is certified.

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What If There Is An Incident?

- Take care of the child. Secure emergency medical help if needed.
- Contact a staff member as soon as is reasonably possible.
- Be ready to report on all details of the incident.
- Contact the appropriate authorities.



What If The Media Is Involved?

- **Refer all questions/comments to our church's official spokesperson. This will either be Pastor Jeff Garrett or the person he designates.**



***HALLMARKS OF OUR SAFE
SANCTUARY POLICY***

**First United Methodist Church
Forney, TX**



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Two By Two

- **Try to always have two responsible persons present whenever a child/youth is present.**



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Line of Sight

- **Stay visible to others.**
- **Keep the door open.**
- **Stay in an area where others can see you.**

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Safety in Numbers

- Especially with children, try to avoid situations where there is one adult and one child.
- Especially when non-Safe Sanctuary certified adults are present, make sure at least one Safe Sanctuary certified individual is present.



Special Circumstances

- Sign a waiver/revocation for an ongoing situation such as counseling, piano lessons, etc.
- Keep door open
(Ex: counseling one on one).
- Caravan when only one adult in vehicle with multiple children/youth.

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Restroom Assistance (as rewards children

- Children in 1st grade and up can go to the restroom in pairs without direct supervision.
- If you must accompany a child into the restroom alone, leave the door ajar and alert the other adult present.
- If you encounter an "ongoing" situation (perhaps you have a child with special needs in your class), contact Pastor Amy Madrid to make arrangements for assistance.



Changing Diapers

- **It is appropriate to change diapers as needed.**
- **Diapers should be changed in an open environment.**

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Fire Alarms



- If the fire alarm goes off, the building should be evacuated.
- Gather the children/youth, count carefully and go out the nearest safe exit.
- Stay outside the building until the "all clear signal" is given.

Health Emergences



- **First aid kits are located in numerous areas. Ask your direct staff supervisor for the locations in your area.**
- **Do not hesitate to call 911 if needed.**
- **Contact a staff person as soon as possible.**

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Appropriate Discipline



- For children:
 - Make children/parents aware of rules.
 - Use gentle reminders. Stand near child to remind him/her of your presence.
 - Physical or punitive punishment is not appropriate. Reasonable and supervised time out is acceptable.
 - Keep parents aware of issues.
 - Contact Amy to make decision whether child should be sent home in extreme cases.

Appropriate Discipline (cont)



- For Youth:
 - Make youth & parents aware of rules.
 - Use gentle reminders.
 - Physical or punitive punishment is not appropriate. Reasonable and supervised time out is acceptable.
 - If behavior does not improve, contact Jeremiah.
 - In extreme cases, the youth may be sent home. The youth staff will make this decision.

Setting Boundaries



- Physical boundaries change as children age. Holding a young child in your lap is appropriate. Holding an older child or youth in your lap is not appropriate.
- Do not allow children or youth to become too attached.
- Always be aware of where a conversation might go. Steer conversations appropriately.
- If you feel boundaries are being violated, allow great distance to come between you and the young person.
- Contact a staff person if you feel uncomfortable with a situation.



Who Is A Responsible Party"?

First UMC-Forney has a rich history of using youth and college students in supervisory positions.

- As regards children, older youth and college students may be used in supervisory situations with children. (Ex: a small group shepherd at VBS)
- As regards youth, anyone under the age of 21 is considered an assistant leader and not "in charge" of youth.

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Overnight Accommodations

- It is strongly recommended that two adults (or for children, one adult and one older youth) be present in each room or in close proximity to the room.
- If only one adult is present, there must be more than one child/youth present.
- Adults are not to sleep in the same bed with a child/youth.



Leader Misconduct

- Working with children/youth is a great privilege.
- If that privilege is violated, you will be removed from contact with children/youth.
- If necessary, the appropriate authorities will be contacted.



Sexual Harassment

- Sexual harassment is any unwanted sexual advance or demand, either verbal or physical, which is reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive.
- The key factor in sexual harassment is **PERCEPTION**.



Tips to Avoid Sexual Harassment

- Be a good example – treat everyone with respect.
- Stick to handshakes. (Except with young children).
- Ask yourself: "Would I act this way if my spouse/significant other was present?"
- "Would I want someone to act this way to my spouse/significant other?"



More *Tips*

- Ask yourself: "Would I want my behavior broadcast on the news?"
- Is there equal participation between you and the person you are interacting with? If not, back away!
- Read other's verbal and physical cues.
- When in doubt, back away.



More *Tips*

- Avoid sexualized language. (Ex: sexy, hot)
- Avoid comments or compliments of a personal nature unless you are sure how they will be received.
- Be aware of other's personal space.



Very Important

- **IT IS NOT THE INTENT THAT MATIERS.**
- **IT IS HOW IT IS RECEIVED THAT IS THE ISSUE.**



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Questions?

- Contact Pastor Amy Madrid,
Amy@FirstMethodistForney.org
972.564.0500, ex. 105
- Contact Pastor Jeremiah Meadows,
Jeremiah@FirstMethodistForney.org
972.564.0500, ex. 103



Now What?

- While it's fresh on your mind, take the quiz on this presentation. The quiz is located on FirstMethodistForney.org
- If you haven't already turned in your paperwork, download it off of FirstMethodistForney.org or pick up copies at the church in the office.
- Have two people send in references. The forms are on FirstMethodistForney.org
- Once we have received everything, we'll contact you if we have any questions.
- Thanks!

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