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## **Certification Process for Working with Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults**

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1. All Staff, Leaders and Volunteers shall complete an application/consent form. By signing the form, the applicant gives permission to have references check and background screening completed by the Confidentiality Officer.
2. The application will be processed by the Confidentiality Officer at Gethsemane United Methodist Church
3. All applicants must attend Safe Sanctuary training.

### **Basic Procedures for Safe Sanctuary Policies**

1. *Appropriate Interpersonal Boundaries* are to be maintained between adults and children so youth may experience relationships that are healthy physically and spiritually. Adults must role model respectful and nurturing behaviors that do not interfere with another person's privacy. Examples include appropriate: dress, language, and demonstrations of affection. "If it is not yours, don't touch it."
2. *The Two-Adult Rule* means no fewer than two adults [unrelated by blood or marriage] will be present at all times during any church sponsored program or event.
3. *The Five-Years-Older Rule* requires adult volunteers to be at least 5 years older than the children/youth they lead.
4. *No Worker Under the Age of 21* may serve in an adult capacity. Younger youth willing to assist a teacher may serve as an extra set of hands, but may not replace the second adult and they must be at least 5 years older than the children. All helpers with youth shall be at least 18 years old.
5. *Windows in All Classroom Doors* removes the opportunity for secrecy and isolation. Each room set aside for use by children and/or youth should have a door with a window or half-door.

6. *Open-Door Counseling* is required for youth and other people must be present. Any counseling need of any youth or the youth's family should be reported to the Pastor.
7. *Limited Counseling Sessions* requires referral to a counselor with expertise in the need of the youth beyond two to three sessions.
8. *Advance notice to parents* with full information about the event youth will be participating in is required. Before the event, parents must give written permission for their child to participate and must be notified if a worker will be alone with a child, such as on the last leg of a transportation route.
9. *Bathroom procedures* for children and youth include: children under five should be escorted to the bathroom. A buddy system for children should be practiced.
10. First Aid/CPR Training for staff working with children and youth.

### **Reporting of Incidents**

1. If a leader observes or suspects a violation of the Safe Sanctuary policy, these steps must be taken immediately.
  - a. Address any immediate needs the participant may have.  
Report concerns to event coordinator.
  - c. Cooperate with leadership and authorities' throughout the violation
2. If a Staff, Leader, or Volunteer suspects that abuse or any suspected violation of the Maryland penal Code is taking or has taken place, he or she shall call the Confidentiality Officer immediately.