

Final

Approved by Church Council October 13, 2008

Asbury United Methodist Church Shepherdstown, WV

SAFE SANCTUARIES POLICIES

<http://www.bwcumc.org/content/safe-sanctuary-faqs>

Reducing the Risk of Abuse

FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

Spring 2008

PREAMBLE:

When the disciples tried to keep the children away from Jesus, he was quick to respond, “Let the children come to me”. Jesus taught that children were to be included and provided for within the community of faith. Today, the church may be the only place where some children find the unconditional love and care they so desperately need to grow and thrive. As Christians, we must take our responsibilities to our children very seriously. We fail in our responsibilities if we neglect to take adequate precautions against abuse in our churches. It is unlikely that we can completely prevent child abuse in every situation, but it is possible for us to greatly reduce the risk by following a thorough practical policy of prevention. These policies attempts to do just that for Asbury UMC. It is based on our understanding of the widespread problem of abuse throughout our country.

Every 15 seconds a child is abused or neglected.¹ Often abuse occurs in settings where children, youth or vulnerable adults should have been able to feel safe -- homes, schools, camps, and most sadly the church. In more than three quarters of the reported incidents of child abuse, the victim was related to or acquainted with the abuser.²

The purpose of these policies is to protect all the children that come to us, to protect both our paid staff and volunteer staff from potential false allegations of abuse and to limit the extent of legal liability of Asbury United Methodist Church.

Presented herein is a comprehensive plan that will include all the areas of the issue: **Recruiting, Screening, Hiring Procedures all Staff (Paid and Volunteer), Supervision, Reporting Procedures, Response Plan, and safe sanctuaries policies self evaluation.**

Asbury is beginning a Safe Sanctuaries Policies Project. The design of these policies is to ensure that Asbury is a safe and holy place for our children, youth, and the people who work with them. By undergoing these Safe Sanctuaries Policies, we can show our commitment to demonstrating the love of Jesus so that each child and adult is “...surrounded by steadfast love,...established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal” (“Baptismal Covenant II, “United Methodist Hymnal, P.44).

The following are the Asbury’s Safe Sanctuaries Policies Task Force recommendations:

RECOMMENDATIONS

When “Church Group” is used, it means a group within Asbury that involves children or youth, including but not limited to the following:

Sunday School	Vacation Bible School	Middle High United Methodist Youth Fellowship
Senior High United Methodist Youth Fellowship	Acolytes and Liturgists	Youth Dancing Angels
Cub Scouts	Girl Scouts	Youth Dancing Chosen Vessels
Youth STEP Team	Youth Choir	Youth Praise Team
Children Church	Youth School Sharpener After School Program	The Nursery
Youth Basketball	Youth Soccer & other Sports	Persons providing and receiving childcare for special activities

When “Supervising Worker” is used, it means a paid staff or volunteer adult who works with children or youth in a supervisory capacity on a part-time or full-time basis, such as the Church School Teachers.

When “Occasional Worker” is used, it means a paid staff or volunteer adult who works with children or youth on only an occasional basis in a non-supervisory capacity, such as the parent volunteers who occasionally helps in the Church School.

When “Worker” is used, it means a Supervising Worker or an Occasional Worker.

1. OVERALL POLICY

Asbury Church Policy Regarding the Safety of Children and Youth see (Attachment A). The resolution adopted by the General Conference of the United Methodist Church in April 1996 is the basis for this policy. It sets forth the commitment of Asbury UMC to the safety and spiritual growth of all children and youth participating in church-sponsored activities, as well as the people who work with them.

2. SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT OF WORKERS

Background Checks

Asbury UMC conducts background checks on all clergy, full-time, paid staff, regardless of whether they would be considered as Supervising Worker, an Occasional Worker, or neither.

The Staff Pastor-Parish Relations Committee or the Board of Trustees, as appropriate, should determine how to obtain and store these background checks in a secure manner.

Liability Insurance

The Board of Trustees should review the liability insurance policy for Asbury UMC to be sure that it provides for what it feels is an adequate amount of protection with respect to child and youth safety, and specifically with respect to sexual misconduct claims.

Questionnaires

All Supervising Workers and un-appointed clergy must complete and sign the Questionnaire and Response Form on Sexual Misconduct for Lay Persons & Un-appointed Clergy on an annual basis. (Attachment B). Asbury UMC should use its best efforts to have all Occasional Workers complete and sign the Questionnaire as well.

All appointed clergy are required to complete and sign a similar Questionnaire on an annual basis.

The Staff Pastor-Parish Relations Committee is responsible for working with church management to collect, examine, and store all Questionnaires in a secure manner. The Staff Pastor-Parish Relations Committee will work with Asbury's Youth Pastor, to create a procedure that results in efficiently obtaining the signed Questionnaires while maintaining their confidentiality. A short letter of explanation accompany the Questionnaire is suggested.

Outside groups who use Asbury's facilities and who work with children or youth are required to complete and sign the Sexual Misconduct Questionnaire. A signed statement must be provided attesting to the validity of those who have been screened that work with children or youth. Asked questions must be equivalent to those on the Questionnaire. Asbury's Board of Trustees will work with Asbury's Youth Pastor to be responsible for working with outside groups and ensuring that they comply with this requirement.

Youths (persons ages 10 to 17) will not be required to complete and sign the Questionnaire prior to serving as youth aides at a Church Group activity. Instead,

- (1) Asbury will permit a person to serve as a youth aide for a Church Group activity only if there are 1 or 2 adult Workers present, and
- (2) The Dean of the Asbury Academy will develop/provide an orientation session for Youth Aides in the Asbury Academy annual curriculum that will educate them about among other things, appropriate interaction with children, and
- (3) Any Church Group desiring the help of youth aides should consider requiring those Youth Aides to sign some type of participation covenant in which they would agree to abide by the Basic Procedures Regarding Safety of Children and Youth and any other procedures applicable to that Church Group. A sample of such a participation covenant is attached hereto as Attachment C.

Abuse Survivors

We strongly recommend that if one is aware of a person who is interested in working with our children or youth who is an abuse survivor one should encourage that person to prayerfully consider the following prior to working with our children or youth.

- (1) discuss that experience with one of the pastors (certified to provide counseling) or
- (2) Another counselor (certified to provide counseling).

The Church Council should convey this message to all Church Group leaders and instruct them to pass it along as they see fit.

Employment Application

We recommend that the church use the attached Employment Application (Attachment D) when engaging in the process of hiring a paid worker.

Form for Reference Check

We recommend that the church also use the attached Form for Reference Check (Attachment E) when engaging in the process of hiring a paid worker. It provides a more organized and thorough means of obtaining useful information when doing a reference check.

3. BASIC PROCEDURES

Basic Procedures Regarding Safety of Children and Youth

Each Church Group should review its own operational procedures with an eye toward protecting the safety of our children and youth, as well as the people who work with them. Attached are the Basic Procedures Regarding Safety of Children and Youth (Attachment F). Each Church Group should incorporate these Basic Procedures into their own procedures and practices.

Emergency Procedures

In light of recent national events, we recommend that the Board of Trustees work with Asbury's Youth Pastor to implement Emergency Code Procedures for all Church Groups. These emergency code procedures will be consistent and aligned with the procedures followed by the [Jefferson County Public School System](#) (Attachment L).

Disaster Readiness Procedures

As disciples of Jesus Christ, it is imperative to help everyone to be prepared and to be able to help others when disasters occur. The Asbury UMC should establish an ongoing relationship with those in the community who work with disaster relief. We recommend adhering to the Baltimore-Washington Conference (BWC) policies as developed and set forth in "Local Church Disaster Preparedness Manual" by the BWC of the UMC Local Church. The Disaster Response Manual, http://www.bwcumc.org/files/DISASTER_RESPONSE_MANUAL2.pdf (66pages) provides a plan in which Asbury to follow for safety of the congregation, and community for church leaders' preparation and response. This document provides guidelines for dealing with a disaster from the earliest stages to the concluding phases of documentation and evaluation.

4. PHYSICAL FACILITIES

Proposed Changes to Physical Facility

In an effort to make the physical church facility as safe as possible for our children and youth, we recommend that the church make the physical changes set out on the attached Proposed Changes to Physical Facility (Attachment G) in the order of priority, and within the time frame, set out therein.

5. EDUCATION OF CONGREGATION

Education and Orientations

We recommend that on at least an annual basis Asbury UMC through The Asbury Academy conduct orientations for all persons working with children or youth, including Supervising Workers, Occasional Workers, youth aides, and all parents and/or guardians of children or youth participating

in church-sponsored activities. In addition to other subjects, these orientations should familiarize these people with appropriate interactions with children, permissible methods of discipline, the realities of child abuse and neglect, the possible indicators of child abuse and neglect, the Basic Procedures Regarding Safety of Children and Youth, and any other applicable procedures.

Attached is a summary of suggested points for each orientation (Attachment H).

As part of the announcement of Asbury's new Policy Regarding Safety of Children and Youth, Asbury's Senior Pastor's responsibility is to educate the congregation by providing some background on this issue during a regular Sunday services. For guidance, Asbury Senior Pastor may want to review Attachment H. In addition, to provide further education to the congregation on these issues we would suggest that Asbury's Senior Pastor, Asbury's Academy Dean, Asbury Youth Pastor, or the person in charge of the Safe Sanctuaries Project Task Force, write an epistle article to the congregants. Finally, we suggest that the Senior Pastor who conducts the new member orientations mention Asbury's new Policy, as well as the requirement that all Supervising Workers and Occasional Workers sign a Questionnaire. The Senior Pastor might consider having Questionnaires available at the orientation so that new members may complete them there.

6. PROCEDURE FOLLOWING ALLEGATION OF CHILD ABUSE OR SUSPICION OF CHILD NEGLECT

The procedure to follow-after an allegation of child abuse is set out in paragraph 2820 of the United Methodist Church manual. We have supplemented this procedure with the Local Procedure Following Allegation of Child Abuse (Attachment I), which includes some requirements that are more specific to Asbury UMC, as well as the local reporting requirements. Everyone involved with an allegation of child abuse should be sure to comply with both sets of procedures.

Also attached is the Procedure Following Suspicion of Child Neglect (Attachment J) that sets out the local reporting requirements in the event someone at Asbury begins to suspect child neglect with respect to one of our children or youth.

Also attached is a form of Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse or Neglect (Attachment K) to be filled out after an allegation of child abuse has occurred or when someone at Asbury UMC begins to suspect child neglect.

MEMORANDUM

FROM: Safe Sanctuaries Task Force

DATE:

RE: New Safe Sanctuaries Policies

The Church Council of Asbury UMC has adopted Safe Sanctuaries policies and approved all the documents and procedures relating to it. The adoption of these safe sanctuary policies will help to ensure that our church, for our children, youth, and as well as the people who work with them has a safe and holy place in which to function.

In drafting the policy and accompanying documents and procedures, the Task Force tried very hard to balance the need to protect our children and youth with the need to conduct our children and youth programs in a flexible and volunteer-friendly manner. Please remember that we hope that these policies will be a positive change here at Asbury UMC. Before informing someone that they may not do something due to these new policies, please be sure to read this package carefully or give Asbury's Senior Pastor a call for any clarification.

The Safe Sanctuaries policy, documents, and procedures are not set in stone. If you find that a procedure that we have drafted is not workable, please be sure to contact the Senior Pastor. The Church office will keep a list of suggested changes in anticipation of a fine-tuning of these documents within a year or two. Thanks for your help and support!

The attached package includes the following:

1. Summary of Recommendations
2. Policy Regarding Safety of Children and Youth (Attachment A)
3. Sample Safe Sanctuaries Questionnaire (Attachment B- V1 and V2)
4. Sample Participation Covenant (Attachment C)
5. Sample Employment Application (Attachment D)
6. Sample Form for Reference Check (Attachment E)
7. Basic Procedures Regarding Safety of Children and Youth (Attachment F)
8. Proposed Changes to Physical Facility (Attachment G)
9. Points to Be Made at Church Orientations (Attachment H)
10. Local Procedure Following Allegation of Child Abuse (Attachment I)
11. Procedure Following Suspicion of Child Neglect (Attachment J)
12. Sample Report of Suspected Incident of Child Abuse or Neglect (Attachment K)
13. Jefferson County Public School Emergency Code Procedures (Attachment L)

The sections that warrant a particularly careful review are the Summary of Recommendations at the front of the package and the Basic Procedures Regarding Safety of Children and Youth (Exhibit F).

Asbury UMC/ST Safe Sanctuary Task Force

Ora Dixon	SPPR Chair	Michael Taylor-Sunday School Superintendent
Carla Hunter	SPPR Committee	Pamela Boomer Worship Leader
Lakita Edwards	SPPR Committee	Tommy Murray Youth Pastor
Ruth Brown	Nursery Care Coordinator	Heather Gayle Youth Rep to Church Council
Tamika Dennis	Youth Rep to Church Council	

**Asbury's United Methodist Church
Shepherdstown, WV**

**SAFE SANCTUARIES
Spring 2008**

**POLICY REGARDING SAFETY OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH
[Attachment A]**

Introduction

In April 1996, the General Conference of The United Methodist Church adopted a resolution aimed at reducing the risk of child sexual abuse in the church. The adopted resolution includes the following statement:

Jesus said, "Whoever welcomes [a] child . . . welcomes me." (Matthew 18:5). Children are our present and our future, our hope, our teachers, our inspiration. They are full participants in the life of the church and in the realm of God.

Jesus also said, "If any of 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 18:6). Our Christian faith calls us to offer both hospitality and protection to the little ones, the children. The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church state that "children must be protected from economic, physical, emotional and sexual exploitation, and abuse" (162C).

Tragically, churches have not always been safe places for children. Child sexual abuse, exploitation and ritual abuse ("ritual abuse" refers to abusive acts committed as part of ceremonies or rites; ritual abusers are often related to cults, or pretend to be) occur in churches, both large and small, urban and rural. The problem cuts across all economic, cultural, and racial lines. It is real, and it appears to be increasing. Most annual conferences can cite specific incidents of child sexual abuse and exploitation within churches. Virtually every congregation has among its members adult survivors of early sexual trauma.

Such incidents are devastating to all who are involved: the child, the family, the local church, and its leaders. Increasingly, churches are torn apart by the legal, emotional, monetary consequences of litigation, following allegations of abuse.

God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from sexual and ritual abuse. God calls us to create communities of faith where children and adults grow safe and strong. (From *The Book of Resolutions of The United Methodist Church*—2000, pp. 180-181. Copyright © 2000 by The United Methodist Publishing House. Used by permission.)

Thus, in covenant with all United Methodist congregations, we adopt this Policy Regarding Safety of Children and Youth in Asbury UMC Shepherdstown.

Purpose

Asbury's Congregation purpose for establishing this Policy Regarding Safety of Children and Youth is to demonstrate our absolute and unwavering commitment to the safety and spiritual growth of our children and youth. Asbury UMC reflects this commitment in our congregation's statement of purpose. This purpose states Asbury's determination to help all "grow as disciples of Christ".

Statement of Covenant

Therefore, as a Christian community of faith and a United Methodist congregation, we pledge to conduct the ministry of the gospel in ways that assure the safety and spiritual growth of all children and youth participating in church-sponsored activities, as well as the paid staff and volunteers who work with them.

We will follow reasonable safety measures in the selection and recruitment of all paid staff and volunteer workers.

We will implement prudent operational procedures in all programs and events.

We will undertake to ensure that the physical facility of the church is as safe as possible for children and youth.

We will educate all of our paid staff and volunteer workers regarding child neglect, child abuse and the use of appropriate procedures to protect against child abuse.

We will have a clearly defined procedure for reporting a suspected or confirmed incident of child abuse or neglect that conforms to the requirements of state law.

So that we will be more accountable in implementing this policy, we will be prepared to respond to media inquiries, if an incident occurs.

Conclusion

In all of our ministries with children and youth, this congregation is committed to demonstrating the love of Jesus Christ so that each child will be “. . .surrounded by steadfast love, . . .established in the faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal” (“Baptismal Covenant II,” United Methodist Hymnal, p. 44).

[Attachment B, V1]

Questionnaire

(Please check the appropriate box. If more space is needed, please use an additional sheet of paper.)

Name _____ Phone Number (h) _____

Address _____

Occupation _____ Employer _____

Work Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email _____

1. Have you ever been accused, in a written and signed statement, of sexual misconduct with a child or a youth? ___Yes ___No

2. Have you ever been accused, in a written and signed statement, of sexual misconduct with an adult? ___Yes ___No

3. Have you ever been dismissed from any position, volunteer, or salaried, because of accusations of sexual misconduct on your part? ___Yes ___No

4. Have you ever resigned from any position, volunteer or salaried, because of an accusation of sexual misconduct on your part, or to avoid being dismissed because of an accusation of sexual misconduct on your part? ___Yes ___No

5. If your response to any of the foregoing questions (1 through 4) is "yes", please provide on a separate sheet of paper all details regarding each accusation of sexual misconduct that has been made with respect to you. Include a description of the alleged conduct, the name of the person who made the accusation, the date of the alleged misconduct, and the name of your employer at the time of the alleged misconduct.

6. Have accusations of sexual misconduct on your part ever resulted in civil or criminal court proceedings at any level (e.g., indictment, arrest, trial, etc.)? ___Yes ___No
If yes, please provide the complete details of those proceedings (including dates, circumstances, the jurisdiction where the proceedings occurred, the nature of the accusations, and the result of the proceedings) on a separate sheet of paper.

6a. Have accusations of sexual misconduct against you resulted in civil or criminal court proceedings on more than one occasion? ___Yes ___No
If yes, please provide the complete details of those proceedings (including dates, circumstances, the jurisdiction where the proceedings occurred, the nature of the accusations, and the result of the proceedings) on a separate sheet of paper.

7. Other than the above, is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your entrustment with the supervision, guidance and care of young people?
___Yes ___No

If yes, please provide the complete details of those facts (including dates, circumstances, and the results) on a separate sheet of paper.

8. Please provide three adult references (names, addresses, phone numbers) of persons who are not related to you by blood, marriage, or other family relationship, and are not employed, or supervised by you. In addition, who can to the best of their ability, provide statements in support of your good character, and clean record in regard, to sexual misconduct with children, youth, and adults.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (home) _____ Phone (Cell) _____

Email _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (home) _____ Phone (Cell) _____

Email _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (home) _____ Phone (Cell) _____

Email _____

Questionnaire Response Form

(To be signed by all lay persons and unappointed clergy who work with children or youth within Asbury's United Methodist Church. If under 18, a parent or guardian must also sign.)

I verify that the answers I have provided on this Questionnaire are true and accurate to the best of my ability. I understand that false answers as well as the failure to sign this Response Form, will result in my being denied the position for which I am being considered.

Signature

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____
(if under 18) Signature

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Asbury United Methodist Church
Shepherdstown, WV
Spring 2008

[Attachment B, V2]

Questionnaire

(Please check the appropriate box. If more space is needed, please use an additional sheet of paper.)

Name _____ Phone Number _____

Address _____

Occupation _____ Employer _____

Work Phone _____

1. Have you ever filled out this questionnaire for Asbury United Methodist Church?
___Yes ___No

If no, please answer questions 2 through 9 below.

If yes, give the date: _____

Have any answers changed since you filled out that copy? ___Yes ___No

If no, please sign and return this form.

If yes or you are unsure, please answer questions 2 through 9 below.

2. Have you ever been accused, in a written and signed statement, of sexual misconduct with a child or a youth? ___Yes ___No

3. Have you ever been accused, in a written and signed statement, of sexual misconduct with an adult? ___Yes ___No

4. Have you ever been dismissed from any position, volunteer or salaried, because of accusations of sexual misconduct on your part? ___Yes ___No

5. Have you ever resigned from any position, volunteer or salaried, because of an accusation of sexual misconduct on your part, or to avoid being dismissed because of an accusation of sexual misconduct on your part? ___Yes ___No

6. If your response to any of the foregoing questions (1 through 4) is "yes", please provide on a separate sheet of paper all details regarding each accusation of sexual misconduct that have been made with respect to you. In addition, include a description of the alleged conduct, the name of the person who made the accusation, the date of the alleged misconduct, and the name of your employer at the time of the alleged misconduct.

- 7a. Have accusations of sexual misconduct on your part ever resulted in civil or criminal court proceedings at any level (e.g., indictment, arrest, trial, etc.)? ___Yes ___No

If yes, please provide the complete details of those proceedings (including dates, circumstances, the jurisdiction where the proceedings occurred, the nature of the accusations, and the result of the proceedings) on a separate sheet of paper.

7b. Have accusations of sexual misconduct against you resulted in civil or criminal court proceedings on more than one occasion? ___Yes ___No

8. Other than the above, is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your entrustment with the supervision, guidance and care of young people? ___Yes ___No

If yes, please provide the complete details of those facts (including dates, circumstances, and the results) on a separate sheet of paper.

9. Please provide three adult references (names, addresses, and phone numbers) of persons who are not related to you by blood, marriage, or other family relationship and are not employed or supervised by you. In addition, who can, to the best of their ability provide statements in support of your good character and clean record in regards to sexual misconduct with children, youth, and adults.

Name_____

Address_____

Phone (home)_____ Phone (Cell)_____

Email_____

Name_____

Address_____

Phone (home)_____ Phone (Cell)_____

Email_____

Name_____

Address_____

Phone (home)_____ Phone (Cell)_____

Email_____

Questionnaire Response Form

(To be signed by all lay persons and unappointed clergy who work with children or youth within Asbury United Methodist Church. If under 18, a parent or guardian must also sign.)

I verify that the answers I have provided on this Questionnaire are true and accurate to the best of my ability. I understand that false answers, as well as the failure to sign this Response Form, will result in my being denied the position for which I am being considered.

Signature

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____
(if under 18) Signature

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Asbury United Methodist Church
Shepherdstown, WV
Spring 2008

PARTICIPATION COVENANT STATEMENT [Attachment C]

The congregation of Asbury United Methodist Church is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all children and youth, as well as all paid staff and volunteers who participate in children and youth ministries and activities sponsored by the church. The following policy statements reflect our congregation's commitment to preserving this church as a holy place of safety and protection for all who would enter and as a place in which all people can experience the love of God through relationships with others.

1. No paid staff person or volunteer who has been convicted of child abuse (either sexual abuse, physical abuse, or emotional abuse) may work with children or youth in any church-sponsored activity.
2. Survivors of child abuse need the love and support of our congregation. Any survivor of child abuse who desires to work as a paid staff person or volunteer in some capacity with children or youth is encouraged to discuss his/her willingness with Asbury's Senior Pastor before accepting an assignment.
3. All paid staff and volunteers involved with children or youth of our church must abide by the attached Policies and Procedures.
4. All paid staff and volunteers involved with children or youth of our church must attend regular training and educational events provided by the church related to their job or volunteer assignment, including those providing information about church policies and state laws regarding child abuse.

5. All paid staff and volunteers shall immediately report to their supervisor any behavior that seems abusive or inappropriate.

Please answer each of the following questions:

1. As a paid staff person or volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to inform a minister of this congregation if you are convicted of child abuse?

Yes No

2. Please answer the following question only if you are a survivor of child abuse. As a paid staff person or volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to discuss with a minister of this congregation your experience as a survivor of child abuse? Yes No

(Answering no to this question does not automatically disqualify you from volunteering with children or youth.)

3. As a paid staff person or volunteer, do you agree to observe and abide by the attached Policies and Procedures?

Yes No

4. As a paid staff person or volunteer, do you agree to participate in regular training and educational events provided by the church related to your job or volunteer assignment, including those providing information about church policies and state laws regarding child abuse?

Yes No

5. As a paid staff person or volunteer in this congregation, do you agree to promptly report abusive or inappropriate behavior to your supervisor?

Yes No

I have read this Participation Covenant Statement, and I agree to observe and abide by the policies set forth above.

Signature

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

(if under 18)

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Asbury United Methodist Church
Shepherdstown, WV
Spring 2008

**ASBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
SHEPHERDSTOWN, WV**

Spring 2008

SCREENING FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH VOLUNTEERS

Thank you for volunteering to work with Asbury UMC to serve our children and youth. Your contribution is important and much appreciated. We ask that everyone who works with our Children or youth read and sign the following Code of Ethics, and complete the attached Application and Screening Forms.

CODE OF ETHICS

The Book of Resolutions for the United Methodist Church states that we support “methods of education designed to assist every child toward complete fulfillment as an individual person of worth.” Adults and older youth who volunteer to work with Asbury’s children and youth are in a position of stewardship, and play a key role in fostering spiritual development of both individuals and community. It is, therefore, especially important that those in leadership positions be well qualified to provide the special nurture, care and support that will enable children and youth to develop a positive sense of self and spirit of independence and responsibility.

The relationship between young people and their leaders must be one of mutual respect, if this positive potential is to be realized. There are no more important areas of growth than those of self-worth and the development of a healthy identity as a sexual being. Adults play a key role in assisting children and youth in these areas of growth.

Children, youth and adults can suffer damaging effects when leaders engage in sexual conduct with young persons in their care. Therefore, it is expected that leaders’ behavior will respect the worth and dignity of each child and youth. To this end, leaders must refrain from engaging in sexual, seductive or erotic behavior with children and youth. They may not sexually harass or engage in behavior with children or youth which constitutes verbal, emotional or physical abuse.

The Volunteer acknowledges by signing this statement that he or she understands and agrees to comply with this Code of Ethics. The Volunteer has read the Basic Operating Procedures for Safe Ministry with Children and Youth and agrees to observe them in working with children and youth. The Volunteer agrees to be bound by the Policies and Procedures For the Prevention of Child Abuse of Asbury UMC. In addition, the Volunteer represents that he or she has filled out the attached Application and Screening Forms completely and truthfully, and agrees that in the event that he or she has been arrested for or charged in a court with any crime or offense involving a minor, he or she shall immediately notify the Senior *Pastor and shall suspend his or her activities with children and youth of the Church.*

I have read and understand the above statements of position, expectations and actions.

Signature

Date

SAFE SANCTUARIES BASIC OPERATING PROCEDURES

1. Two Adult Rule
2. Windows In All The Classroom Doors
3. No Workers Under The Age of Eighteen
4. Five-Years-Older Rule
5. Open Door Counseling
6. First Aid/CPR Training
7. Annual Orientation for Workers
8. Advance Notice to Parents
9. Participation Covenant For All Participants and Leaders
10. Parent and Family Education
11. Appropriate Equipment and Supervision

What are the benefits of each?

What are the costs of each?

BASIC PROCEDURES FOR SAFE MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Based in part on Safe Sanctuaries-Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in the Church¹

Each of the following procedures is important in a congregation's comprehensive prevention strategy. They are not listed in order of important!

The "Six Months Involvement Rule"

The "Six Months Involvement Rule" requires all volunteers and staff to work with children and youth to be involved with your organization for at least six months before they are allowed in any position involving contact with minors.

(Exception: Volunteers and staff cleared utilizing Asbury's Safe Sanctuary Policies)

The "Two Adult Rule"

The "Two Adult Rule" requires no fewer than two adults present at all times during a church sponsored program, event or ministry involving children or youth. Risk will be reduced more if the two adults are unrelated. Abusers thrive on secrecy, isolation and their ability to manipulate victims. When abusers know they will not be left alone, they lose interest in working with children.

The "Five-Years Older Rule"

Leaders of youth ministry should be a minimum of five years older than the oldest youth. Don't make this mistake!

No Workers under age 18

Putting children in charge of children invites disaster. It is common practice in many churches to allow junior or high school aged volunteers to supervise nursery or young children. People under the age of eighteen cannot be expected to have developed the maturity and judgment that is needed to fully respond to young children. However, people under age eighteen can assist a responsible adult, but they should not substitute for an adult under the Two Adult Rule (see above).

Windows in All Classroom Doors

Each room set aside for children and youth should have a door with a window in it or half door. A window removes the opportunity for secrecy and isolation. A half door offers protection against children wandering outside the classroom and allows for full visual access. Adding a window to the pastor's door study or office protects against false allegations of misconduct. Any classroom doors without windows should remain open at all times.

Reference

¹ Melton, Joy Thornburg, *Safe Sanctuaries for Youth, Reducing the Risk of Abuse in Youth Ministries* Discipleship Resources. \$13.00. Go to: www.discipleshipresources.org and search on "Safe Sancturaries."

Open-Door Counseling

At any counseling sessions with children or youth, the doors on the room used should remain open for the entire session, ideally when others are nearby even though not in listening distance. Counseling sessions conducted behind closed doors are a breeding ground for false allegations of abuse. Closed doors make it easy for a child abuser.

First Aid/CPR Training

Providing first aid and CPR training on an annual basis for all church paid staff and volunteers with children and youth is a basic step to assure the safety of children. Having paid staff and volunteers who are prepared to deal with bumps, bruises and scrapes with competency goes a long way toward building the confidence of children and parents involved in the children's ministry.

Advance Notice to Parents

A basic rule with children and youth ministry is to always give parents an advance notice of the annual event schedule at the beginning of the ministry year with full information regarding the event(s) in which their children will participate. Before the event, parents must give written permission for their child to participate. Churches are protected insofar as the parent has been informed of the event. Advance information gives a guideline to parents about scheduling and allows parent and child to decide if the event and its content is suitable for their participation. It also demonstrates that the church has planned thoroughly to provide the safest experience.

Participation Covenant for All Participants and Leaders

A written covenant of participation should be developed and provided to all leaders and participants in children's and youth ministry in which they agree to: (1) take part in the ministry, (2) give their best efforts to the ministry, (3) respect the other participants, (4) treat others as well as they would wish to be treated. Such a covenant is especially useful for establishing the onset of behavior standards expected by everyone. It is also an important reminder for leaders that we will not tolerate abusive behavior toward our children and youth and that it is punishable by Law.

Parent and Family Education

When a congregation has a commitment to a comprehensive plan for the prevention of child abuse with its ministries, it will want to provide information about the plan to the congregation and parents.² A family education event or series of events is highly effective in the disseminating of the components of the church plan. An event could include: (1) a speaker from your local law enforcement agency, (2) a speaker from a local child protection service agency, (3) a doctor or counselor who is experienced in treating abused children, (4) an attorney experienced in advising churches about risk management or loss prevention, (5) a video about the incidence of child sexual abuse within churches, (6) printed copies of your churches abuse prevention policies and procedures, (8) a time for worship and prayer.

² Another resource, including a DVD for church members and resource materials for leaders is: *Reducing the Risk II, Making Your Church Safe from Child Sexual Abuse*, Church Law and Tax Report, P. O. Box 1098, Matthew, NC 28106. \$49.95 (complete kit), \$39.95 (DVD). Go to the bookstore at: www.churchlawtoday.com.

Appropriate Equipment and Supervision

It is very important for those planning ministries with children and youth to think through in advance, the advantages and disadvantages of the setting they are considering. If the ministry involves using special equipment, knowledge of its operation should be familiar. Incredible as it seems, children are often left alone on a playground while adults are inside at dinner. A child can be injured, or taken by a stranger without a single adult witness. Do not let Asbury take a risk!

Adequate Insurance for the Scope of Your Ministry

Every local church needs to be adequately insured for the scope of its ministry! Most insurance companies are now cutting back on insurance coverage for sexual misconduct cases. Many, including the New York Annual Conference's Methodist Plan with Guide One (a large church insurer)³, have specific requirements for a church's safe sanctuaries program which should be consulted. Among those requirements it is becoming increasingly common to require national criminal background checks on certain staff and volunteers, Screening for the driving record of drivers, including volunteers, for church sponsored programs for children and youth is often required by insurers. Failure to obtain required records checks could jeopardize insurance coverage.

³ Many insurers have resources available on-line at no charge such as consent forms, applications for volunteers and staff, and reports on issues. Go to: www.guideone.com and click on Resources.

Previous Volunteer Experience:

Please list any relevant volunteer positions you have held and list the duties you performed in each position, the name of your supervisor, the address and phone number of the volunteer organization, and the dates of your volunteer service.

Are there any other circumstances or matters that might lead someone to question the appropriateness of your employment by this church?

___ Yes ___ No

If yes, please explain: _____

References:

Please list three individuals (who are not related to you by blood or marriage) as references.

Please list people who have known you for at least three years.

1. Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Length of time you have known reference: _____

Relationship to reference: _____ Email: _____

2. Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Length of time you have known reference: _____

Relationship to reference: _____ Email: _____

3. Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Length of time you have known reference: _____

Relationship to reference: _____ Email: _____

Waiver and Consent:

I, _____ hereby certify that the information I have provided on this Employment Application is true and correct. I authorize Asbury United Methodist Church to verify the information I have provided on this Employment Application by contacting the references and employers I have listed, by conducting a criminal records check, or by other means, including contacting others whom I have not listed.

I authorize the references and employers listed in this Employment Application to give you whatever information they may have regarding my character and fitness for the job for which I have applied. Furthermore, I waive any rights I may have to confidentiality or to pursue damages against Asbury United Methodist Church caused by the reference's response.

In the event that this Employment Application is accepted and I become employed by Asbury United Methodist Church, I agree to abide by and be bound by the policies and procedures of Asbury United Methodist Church, and to refrain from inappropriate conduct in the performance of my duties on behalf of Asbury United Methodist Church.

I have read this waiver and the entire application, and I am fully aware of its contents. I sign Employment Application freely and under no duress or coercion.

Signature of Applicant
Print Name: _____
Date: _____

**Asbury United Methodist Church
Shepherdstown, WV**

**SAFE SANCTUARIES POLICIES
Spring 2008**

**BASIC PROCEDURES
REGARDING SAFETY OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH
[Attachment F]**

The following Basic Procedures Regarding Safety of Children and Youth demonstrate the commitment of Asbury UMC to creating and maintaining a safe and holy place for our children and youth, as well as the people who work with them. Each church group that sponsors activities for children or youth should incorporate these into its own procedures and practices.

When “Church Group” is used, it means a group within Asbury that involves children or youth, including but not limited to the following:

Sunday School	Vacation Bible School	Middle High United Methodist Youth Fellowship
Senior High United Methodist Youth Fellowship	Acolytes and Liturgists	Youth Dancing Angels
Cub Scouts	Girl Scouts	Youth Dancing Chosen Vessels
Youth STEP Team	Youth Choir	Youth Praise Team
Children Church	Youth School Sharpener After School Program	The Nursery
Youth Basketball	Youth Soccer & other Sports	Persons providing and receiving childcare for special activities

When “Supervising Worker” is used, it means a paid staff or volunteer adult who works with children or youth in a supervisory capacity on a part-time or full-time basis, such as the Church School Teachers.

When “Occasional Worker” is used, it means a paid staff or volunteer adult who works with children or youth on only an occasional basis in a non-supervisory capacity, such as the parent volunteers who occasionally helps in the Church School.

When “Worker” is used, it means a Supervising Worker or an Occasional Worker.

Supervising Workers

A person may be designated a Supervising Worker only if he or she (1) has signed the Questionnaire, and (2) either has been a church member for 6 months, or is known to the church community by other church members as a caring and nurturing person. At any Church Group activity one, or if practical two, adults should be designated as the Supervising Workers.

Occasional Workers

The church should use its best efforts to have all Occasional Workers complete and sign the Questionnaire.

Visitors

An adult who is simply visiting a Church School activity as a guest speaker, observer, or one-time helper need not complete and sign a Questionnaire. However, one or two Supervising Workers should be present while the visitor is there.

Required Forms.

Each Church Group should require a parent or guardian of a child or youth to complete any forms needed for the participation of that child or youth in that Church Group's activities, such as a Church School registration form, a Vacation Bible School registration form, permission slips, consents and releases. Permission forms are mandated for any activity which takes place away from the church property, or which involves an overnight where the parent or guardian is not present. If the person in charge of a particular Church Group activity has not received the required forms with respect to any child or youth, that child or youth should not be allowed to participate in that Church Group activity.

Dismissal.

Each Church Group should review its dismissal procedures. Supervising Workers should dismiss any child in 4th grade or younger only to a person who is authorized in writing to pick up that child.

Advance Notice and Full Information

Each Church Group should give written advance notice and full information to all parents with respect to any event in which children or youth are participating. In this way, a parent or guardian will have the option not to allow his or her child or youth to participate if he and she feels uncomfortable with any aspect of it.

Age Appropriate and Safe Equipment and Materials.

Each Church Group should make sure that all equipment used is age-appropriate and safe. The Church Group should request that its Workers immediately report to the department head or Asbury's Youth Pastor any unsafe equipment or conditions.

Orientations.

On at least an annual basis, The Dean Asbury Academy and Asbury Youth Pastor should consult, deliver, and conduct orientations for all persons working with children or youth, including Supervising Workers, Occasional Workers, youth aides, and the parents and guardians of children or youth participating in church-sponsored activities. In addition to other subjects, the orientation should familiarize these people with appropriate interactions with children, permissible methods of discipline, the realities of child abuse and neglect, the possible indicators of child abuse and neglect, these Basic Procedures Regarding Safety of Children and Youth, and any other applicable procedures. Asbury and the Baltimore Washington Conference has some resources available for these orientations, including a document entitled "Points to Be Made at Church Orientations".

Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect.

When a Worker becomes aware of an allegation of child abuse in the context of church or home, or begins to suspect child neglect, that Worker should report the allegation or suspicion immediately to the department head, Asbury's Youth Pastor, the Church School Superintendent, or one of the pastors.

Adult Involvement in Church Group Activities.

Each Church Group should attempt to have at least 2 unrelated adult Workers present during any child or youth activity (the "2-adult goal"). Any adult Worker should be at least 3 years older than the oldest child or youth participating in the activity (the "3-years-older rule"). Youth aides (ages 10 to 17) need not meet the 3-years-older rule, but should not be used to meet the 2-adult goal. In addition, a Worker who is under 21 and working with high school youth should not be considered an adult Worker for purposes of the 2-adult goal. Each Church Group should determine under what circumstances the 2-adult goal is practical. We recommend that the 2-adult goal be mandatory with respect to any activities held away from the church facility. On the other hand, in the upper grades of the Church School (1st grade and up), the Church Group may decide it is more practical to use "floaters" instead of a second adult Worker in each classroom.

Youth Aides.

Youth between the ages of 10 and 17 may occasionally serve as aides for certain designated activities and in specific circumstances (such as, where an adult Supervising Worker will oversee the activity). Youth aides need not comply with the 3-years-older rule, but should not be used to meet the 2-adult goal. Any Church Group desiring the help of youth aides should consider requiring them to sign some type of participation covenant in which they would agree to abide by these Basic Procedures Regarding Safety of Children and Youth, and any other procedures applicable to that Church Group. As described above, the church should conduct orientations at least annually to educate youth aides, young adult, and adult Workers (age 21 and above) about, among other things, appropriate interactions with children.

Overnight Activities.

Notwithstanding the 2-adult goal, we recommend that at least 3 adult Workers be present for overnight activities (regardless of whether the overnight activity is held at or away from the church facility), with at least one adult Worker from each gender represented. For overnight activities, wherever possible and safe, adult Workers should sleep in a space that is separate and apart from the space where the youths sleep. Although some overnight activities may be in one room at the church facility, each youth participant should have his or her own sleeping bag and the adult Workers should sleep in a space that is as far apart from where the youth are sleeping as is possible and safe.

Discipline.

Each Church Group should review its method of discipline. It should be clear and understandable, and it should include adequate warnings to the child or youth, good communication with the parent or guardian, and if necessary, the involvement of the supervisor of the Worker doing the disciplining. Each Church Group should educate its Workers annually with respect to its method of discipline.

Window/Open Door Policy.

Every room used for children or youth activities should have at least one window. Pastoral or other counseling of children or youth should not occur behind an entirely closed door.

Diaper Changing Policy and Child/Youth Departures from Rooms.

Any Worker changing a child's diaper should ensure that there is at least one other adult present in the room. If for any reason, including going to the restroom, a child or youth leaves the room where a Church Group activity is being held, the Supervising Worker should monitor that child or youth to the extent possible. The Supervising Worker should use his or her best judgment in deciding how closely that child should be monitored.

Substitutes.

Each Church Group should create a list of approved substitutes for its activities. When a Supervising Worker is unable to participate in a scheduled activity, he or she should arrange for someone on the approved list to substitute. If unable to find a substitute, he or she should call his or her supervisor to make other arrangements.

Attendance.

Each Supervising Worker should take attendance for each activity and keep written records as to which Workers or other adults were present as well.

Emergencies.

Each Church Group should periodically review its emergency procedures to make sure that they are adequate. Each Church Group should familiarize its Workers with the evacuation plan and the specific route applicable to their activity. In addition, each Church Group should instruct its Workers that in the event of an evacuation, the Worker should take his or her attendance sheet and take attendance once outside.

First Aid/CPR Training

Each Church Group should consider designating at least two people to take the required first aid and CPR training on an annual basis.

**Asbury United Methodist Church
Shepherdstown, WV**

**SAFE SANCTUARIES POLICIES
Spring 2008**

**PROPOSED CHANGES TO PHYSICAL FACILITY
(in order of priority)
[Attachment G]**

By October 2010-Complete construction of multipurpose, multi-level building expansion and renovation to existing Asbury building. Construct multipurpose expansion building and renovation to meet Asbury's current safe sanctuaries policies.

By October 2010 – Asbury's Middletown Room, Calvary Room, and Nursery Room doors do not have security windows at the top, or along the side length of frame. The Calvary room is used for multi-media activities, and the Middletown and Nursery rooms for multi-activities. Consider replacing the doors to these rooms with types that has windows inserted at the top or windows viewing along the side length of frame, or insert half doors. **Windows removes the opportunity for secrecy and isolation. Half doors offer protection against children wandering outside the classroom and allows for full visual access.**

By October 2010- The pastor's office doors does not have security windows at the top, or along the side length of frame. Consider replacing the doors with type that has windows inserted at top or windows viewing along the side length of frame. **Adding windows to doors of the pastor's office protects against false allegations of misconduct.**

By October 2010 – The storage room within Asbury's church office is open. Possible solution would be turning it into a locked space for office supplies storage. Another solution is to convert the door to half door or consider replacing the door with type that has window inserted at top or window viewing along the side length of frame. **A window removes the opportunity for secrecy and isolation**

By October 2010 – Youth Center currently has doors on both ends of the room and a door without a window at office making it difficult for teachers/adults to keep track of children/youth exiting. Suggested that both doors locking systems be examined for efficiency in safety egress. **It is very important for those planning ministries with children and youth to think through in advance, the advantages and disadvantages of the setting they are considering.**

By October 2010 -- Where practical, should consider adding locks to the two storage all-purpose rooms (interior), and custodial closet All-Purpose Room (interior). **Locks should prevent both children and unwanted adults from getting in.**

By October 2010 – Continue upgrade of lighting from parking lot to church door and both sides and back of building. **Lighting allows for full visual access and safety security for entering building and egress.**

**Asbury United Methodist Church
Shepherdstown, WV**

**SAFE SANCTUARIES POLICIES
Spring 2008**

**POINTS TO BE MADE AT CHURCH ORIENTATIONS
[Attachment H]**

Attached, is a section of the Safe Sanctuaries guidebook that relates to educating the Asbury family concerning the provision of a safe environment for all children and youth. We suggest that anyone conducting one of the recommended orientations read this section carefully.

The following is a summary of some of the key points that's essential to be made.

1. These Safe Sanctuaries Policies have been in the pipeline for a long time and was not a response to any particular incident at Asbury UMC.
2. These Safe Sanctuaries Policies are not only for the protection against child abuse, but are designed for the general safety of children.
3. The people involved with the Safe Sanctuaries Policies development tried to be very sensitive to the desire that Asbury remain a volunteer-friendly place. In other words, we tried to ensure that any new procedures and requirements did not create a significant burden on our paid staff nor volunteers.
4. The Safe Sanctuaries Policies are designed for protection of the children, the youth of Asbury and the people who work with them. Although there are many, many cases of child abuse each year, there also are many false allegations. Many of the new rules will minimize the possibility of a false allegation by providing, among other things, that there is another adult present whenever there is interaction between an adult and a child or youth.
5. Child abuse unfortunately is a reality in our society and within some churches.
 - In 1997 over 3,000,000 child abuse or neglect cases.
 - Approximately 1 out of 3 girls is sexually abused before the age of 18.
 - 2000 deaths attributable to child abuse and/or neglect occur each year.
6. There are many types of child abuse: physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and ritual abuse.
7. Abusers are usually familiar adults trusted by children. Less than 20 percent of child abuse occurs at the hands of a stranger.
8. The child victim is never responsible for causing the abuse.
9. Indicators of child abuse and neglect -- see page 17 to 18 in attached section.
10. Refer to Basic Procedures Regarding Safety of Children and Youth. Highlight some of them.

SUMMARY OF ORIENTATIONS TO BE CONDUCTED

We recommend that Asbury UMC conduct the following orientations in order to educate our congregation concerning the safety of our children and youth:

- Orientation for Sunday School teachers and youth group leaders
- Orientation for parents of Sunday School students and youth group members
- Orientation for staff of Asbury's Church Groups
- Orientation of youth who will be working with children
- Short orientation of congregation at a service at which the new Policy Regarding Safety of Children and Youth is introduced
- At new member orientation, should mention Asbury's new Policy and procedures, as well as the requirement that any paid staff or volunteer working with children or youth sign a Questionnaire [maybe even have Questionnaires on hand]

**Asbury United Methodist Church
Shepherdstown, WV**

SAFE SANCTUARIES POLICIES

Spring 2008

LOCAL PROCEDURE FOLLOWING ALLEGATION OF CHILD ABUSE

[Attachment I]

The procedure to follow in the event of an allegation of child abuse at any church-sponsored activity is set out in paragraph 2820 of the United Methodist Church manual. The following procedure supplements that procedure by including requirements specific to Asbury UMC, as well as local reporting requirements. It should be modified to the extent required by the facts and circumstances of the specific incident. Anyone involved with an allegation of child abuse should be sure to comply with both sets of procedures.

1. The person first hearing the allegation should immediately contact senior pastor (Rudolph M. Bropleh 304/876-3112) and give him a full description of the allegation.

Done ___ Date/Time: _____

2. The pastor should notify the parents of the child or youth. If applicable, the pastor should assure the parents that their child or youth will be kept safe until they arrive.

Done ___ Date/Time: _____

3. The pastor should immediately remove the alleged abuser from contact with other children.

Done ___ Date/Time: _____

4. The pastor should promptly call the United Methodist Frederick District Superintendent 410-309-3400, ext. 439 and/or the Bishop a (410) 309-3450. If investigations or allegations of abuse should come to the attention of the media, a response shall come from a spokesperson in the Conference Communications Office or as designated by the Bishop. Refer all inquires to the spokesperson.

Done ___ Date/Time: _____

5. The pastor should contact by phone the Child Welfare Services Division of the Jefferson County Health Department (the "local department") to give them a verbal report of the allegation. Phone number is 304-728-8415. If investigations or allegations of abuse should come to the attention of the pastor related to a church activity, during non-business hours the pastor shall call 911 when needed and report the abuse to the appropriate local law enforcement agency and/or the Health Department or the Children Protective and Regulatory Services.

Done ___ Date/Time: _____

6. The pastor should contact the Jefferson County Sheriff/Police Department and give them a verbal report of the allegation. Phone number is 304-728-3205.

Done ___ Date/Time: _____

7. The pastor should notify Amy Miller at the National Church Group Insurance Agency and give her a verbal report of the allegation. Phone number is 703-777-6500. The agency will submit a claim with Asbury's insurance company, Brotherhood Mutual. The Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company will assign an adjuster. Their legal department will contact Asbury about what should be the next course of action.

Done ___ Date/Time: _____

8. The pastor should call a meeting of Asbury's Leadership Team as soon as possible. Asbury Leadership Team consists of the Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor(s), paid staff, The Lay Leader, The Church Council Chair and Church Council member Leaders: SPPR, Christian Education, Youth Ministry, Missions, Trustees, Finance, Worship, Nurture, Communications, Evangelisms/Outreach, and Hospitality. The Leadership Team should designate a spokesperson and agree on any **statement to the congregation or media** with respect to the allegation (See #4 above).

The spokesperson shall not give out any information, simply state that all inquiries will be answered.

9. The statement should not mention the names of any parties involved.

Done ___ Date/Time: _____

10. The pastor should contact an experienced attorney.

Done ___ Date/Time: _____

11. Within 48 hours of the alleged incident, the pastor should fax and mail a written report (see attached report form) to the local department. Fax number is: 304-728-3319. Mailed copy should go to:

Child Welfare Services
Jefferson County Health Department
1948 Wiltshire Road, Suite 1
Kearneysville, West Virginia 25430

and to the

Jefferson County State Prosecuting Attorney
101 E. Washington St.
PO Box 729
Charles Town, WV 25414
304/728-3243 Phone
304/728-3293 Fax

Done ___ Date/Time: _____

11. Keep a written record of the steps Asbury UMC has taken in response to the allegation.

12. In performing all of the above, all persons involved should keep in mind that the confidentiality of the parties involved is of utmost importance.

**Asbury United Methodist Church
Shepherdstown, WV**

**SAFE SANCTUARIES POLICIES
Spring 2008**

**PROCEDURE FOLLOWING SUSPICION OF CHILD NEGLECT
[Attachment J]**

The following is the procedure to be followed in the event of a suspicion of child neglect. It should be modified to the extent required by the facts and circumstances of the specific incident.

1. The person first having a suspicion of child neglect should immediately contact Asbury Senior Pastor (Rudolph M. Bropleh 304/876-3112) and give him a full description of the suspicion.

Done ___ Date/Time: _____

2. The pastor should contact by phone the Child Welfare Services Division of the Jefferson County Health Department (the "local department") to give them a verbal report of the allegation. Phone number is: 304-724-8416.

Done ___ Date/Time: _____

3. Within 48 hours of the alleged incident, the pastor should fax and mail a written report (see attached report form) to the local department. Fax number is: 304-728-3319. The mailed copy should go to:

Child Welfare Services
Jefferson County Health Department
1948 Wiltshire Road, Suite 1
Kearneysville, West Virginia 25430

Done ___ Date/Time: _____

4. Keep a written record of the steps that Asbury UMC has taken in response to the suspicion.

5. In performing all of the above, all persons involved should keep in mind that the confidentiality of the parties involved is of utmost importance.

**Asbury United Methodist Church
Shepherdstown, WV**

**SAFE SANCTUARIES POLICIES
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**REPORT OF SUSPECTED INCIDENT OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT
[Attachment K]**

1. Name of worker (paid staff or volunteer) who observed, or received a report of, alleged child abuse or neglect:

2. Date/time/place of worker's observation or receipt of report:

3. Name of worker (paid staff or volunteer) who had initial conversation with the child concerning alleged child abuse or neglect:

4. Date/time/place of initial conversation with child:

5. Child's name: _____

6. Child's age/date of birth: _____

7. Child's address: _____

8. Mother's Name: _____

9. Mother's Address (if different from child's): _____

10. Father's Name: _____

11. Father's Address (if different from child's): _____

12. Name and address of any other individual responsible for the care of the child:

13. Present location of the child: _____

14. Names and ages of other children in the home: _____

15. Name of person accused of abuse: _____

16. Relationship of accused to child (paid staff, volunteer, family member, other): _____

17. Specific nature and extent of injury, abuse or failure to provide proper care of and attention to the child, and any information concerning possible previous abuse or neglect:

18. Any other information that might aid in establishing the cause of injury, assist in identifying the individual(s) responsible for the abuse or neglect, or relate to the identification of risk:

19. If suspected child abuse or neglect involves a mental injury, a description of the substantial impairment of the child's mental or psychological ability to function that was observed and identified:

20. If suspected child abuse or neglect involves a mental injury, an explanation of why the reporter believes the mental injury is attributable to maltreatment or failure to provide proper care and attention:

Signature of Person Filling Out Report

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Jefferson County Schools
Emergency Code Procedures
[Attachment L]

CODE RED

This is a Lockdown

- Stop Instruction.
- Check hallways and admit students close to your room.
- Lock doors, windows, and close window blinds.
- Move students away from windows to the blind corner of the room.
- Turn off lights, remain calm, maintain silence and retake roll.
- Ignore all alarms and bells.
- Restrict use of cell phones.
- Place the red or green card outside/under your door.

CODE ORANGE

This is a Modified Lockdown On-Site Safety Teams Respond

- Follow directions from the intercom announcements.
- Take attendance and keep your students together.
- DO NOT release students to parents/guardians without permission of the administrator in charge.
- Restrict use of cell phones.
- Report to the administrator in charge any unusual occurrences.
- Follow bells and alarms unless otherwise directed.

CODE YELLOW

On-Site Safety Teams Respond

- Keep Students in the Classroom.
- Assist in Clearing the Emergency Area.
- Respond to Fire Alarms; however, ignore class change bells.
- Restrict use of cell phones.
- Take class roll to verify student count.

CODE GREEN

This is the All Clear

- Listen for a valid designated command.
- Report missing students to the office.
- Resume normal classroom activities.

CODE WHITE

This is a Weather Emergency

- Stop Instruction.
- Close all doors and windows.
- Evacuate students to designated area against inside walls.
- Instruct students to assume a kneeling position, head down with hands covering head. (Duck and Cover.)
- Keep Students quiet.
- Take class roll to verify student count.
- Restrict use of cell phones.
- Under no circumstances are students and staff to be in the gym, cafeteria, auditorium or portable classrooms during a CODE WHITE.
- Listen for CODE GREEN.

**Asbury United Methodist Church
Shepherdstown, WV**

**Safe Sanctuaries Policies
Spring 2008**

Self Evaluation Form

Statement	Yes	No	Unsure
We screen and check references for all paid employees, including clergy, who have any contact with children and/or youth.			
We screen all volunteer workers for any position involving work with children and / or youth.			
We train at least annually all volunteer and/or paid staff with children/youth to understand the nature of abuse and to recognize indicators of abuse.			
We train at least annually all volunteer and/or paid staff with children/youth in how to carry out our policies to prevent abuse.			
Our paid staff and volunteers are informed of state law requirements regarding abuse and their responsibility for reporting incidents.			
We have a clear reporting procedure for a suspected incident of abuse that follows the requirements of our state law.			
We have insurance coverage available in case a complaint of abuse occurs.			
We have a clearly defined building usage strategy as a component of our abuse prevention plan.			
We have a clearly defined response plan to be implemented in case an allegation of abuse is made against someone at Asbury.			
We offer at least annual education opportunities to parents of children and youth about how to recognize and reduce risks of abuse.			
We take our policies to prevent abuse seriously, and we are committed to their enforcement for the safety and security of all our children, youth and the adults who work with them.			

From: "Safe Sanctuaries: Reducing the Risk of Child Abuse in The Church" by Joy Thornberg Melton