

Safe and Sacred Space

An Abuse Prevention Program



A Ministry of the
Kansas East Conference
of
The United Methodist Church

Training Workbook

2010 Revised Issue

Welcome!

Thank you for taking time to be here!

There are few topics that create more emotion than abuse, especially if it is sexual in nature. As individuals involved in ministry we have an important role in providing a safe and sacred environment for all God's children. In addition we strive to maintain an environment that protects the integrity of all who serve. This is our spiritual, moral and legal responsibility.

But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.
Ephesians 5: 3-4

Safe & Sacred Space training, and the completion and approval of all forms, is a requirement for all who are in ministry with children, youth and/or adults with developmental disabilities. Upon satisfactory completion of this process a certification card will be issued for all participants that are approved.

This workbook is yours to keep for future reference.



PLEASE TURN OFF PHONE! THANK YOU

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GOD'S WORDS

Some children were brought to Jesus so he could lay his hands on them and pray for them. The disciples said not to bother him. But Jesus said 'Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these.' And he put his hands on their heads and blessed them before he left.

Matthew 19: 13-15

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: We remember how little children were brought to Jesus for him to bless.

All: Jesus said, "Let the children come to me."

One: We remember how Jesus said, "the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these"

All: Jesus said, "Let the children come to me."

One: To all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

All: As God's children, help us to better minister to all of God's children who are entrusted to our care.

One: As we remember whose we are and those whom we are serving, let us pray together:

All: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are opened, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts through the work of your Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name.

Through Christ our Lord, Amen.

SAFE AND SACRED SPACE

- A safe and sacred space is vital to every person's spiritual health. A place where we can feel secure . . . Unthreatened . . . Free to simply "be" who God creates us to be.
- We're all here because each of us is called and committed to ministry with children, youth and/or individuals with special needs!
- Today, the church may be the only place where some individuals can find a safe and sacred space . . . A place where they find the unconditional love and care they so desperately need to grow, to thrive, and to become faithful people of God.

Let us pray together:

Gracious God,

Surround us, this day, with your presence. Be in our speaking and in our thinking. Help us to have teachable hearts as we learn together.

Amen.

WHY WE ARE HERE

1 Peter 5:1-3

"I have a special concern for church leaders. Here's my concern: that you care for God's flock with all diligence of a shepherd. Not because you have to, but because you want to please God. Not calculating what you can get out of it, but acting spontaneously. Not bossily telling them what to do, but tenderly showing them the way."

The Message//Remix

WE ARE ALL MINISTERS IN A MINISTERIAL ROLE

Minister: *All of us here today are ministers.* Ministers are persons who act as representatives in any capacity in the church (Pastor, Sunday School teacher, youth advisor, choir director, etc.)

Ministerial Role: The relationship of authority and trust in which the above persons are involved.

AWESOME RESPONSIBILITY

WE . . . as parents, leaders, volunteers, **ministers** . . . as Christians . . . must take our responsibility to children, youth and those with special needs seriously, always attending to their spiritual growth and nurturing.

WE must keep our space safe and sacred. We have made that promise!

HOW WE KEEP THE PROMISE

- By being ever mindful that churches are not always safe places for children, youth and those with special needs. Child sexual abuse and exploitation occurs in churches and religious institutions, large and small, urban and rural, cutting across all economic, cultural and racial lines.
- By developing and implementing within the Kansas East Conference and the conference churches, an on-going education and prevention plan based on the reality of child abuse, the risk factors leading to child abuse, and strategies for prevention.
- By adopting screening procedures for workers (paid and unpaid) directly or indirectly involved with children, youth and special needs.
- By developing and implementing safety procedures for church and conference activities.
- By informing children and young persons of an agency, or a person outside as well as within the local church or conference, whom they can contact for advice and help if they have suffered abuse.
- By participation in the Safe and Sacred Space Abuse Prevention Program of the Kansas East Conference.

PERSONAL AWARENESS

Statistics reveal that abuse is more prevalent than many think. Thus, chances are that several people in this room today, male or female, have been abused or know someone who has been abused.

GOAL and FOCUS

The goal of Safe and Sacred Space training is to maintain the integrity of the ministerial relationship and focus on the protection of the vulnerable; children, youth and/or developmentally disabled of all ages. This also includes the protection of adult volunteers, staff and clergy.

TECHNOLOGY

A NEW RESPONSIBILITY IN THE MINISTERIAL SETTING

The Safe and Sacred Space program has primarily focused its training on the protection of children, youth and/or adults with developmental disabilities in face-to-face settings, but we would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the new challenges brought about by the technological advances made in the past decade.

Cellular phones and computers provide opportunities for instant/text messaging, access to email, digital photos, and social networking through sites such as MySpace and FaceBook. While acknowledging the benefits of technology, it must also be recognized that there is now an additional dimension of safety concerns for the church and those in ministry. Within the ministerial context, certified workers need to become better educated about the safe use of technology within the church, recognizing appropriate and inappropriate behavior, and the potential for boundary crossing. Churches may need to develop new guidelines and policies to address some of the risks brought about by technological advances.

Information on these topics may be found on the Kansas East Conference Web site, with downloads for ministerial leaders and workers, as well as parents and others who work with children. Excellent resources may also be found on the web site of Children's Ministries of the United Methodist General Board of Discipleship (<http://www.gbod.org/ministries/children/>)

CHILD ABUSE MYTH or FACT – Test Your knowledge

(National statistics unless noted)

- One in four girls and one in 4 boys will be sexually abused before age 16.
- A report of child abuse is made every minute.
- A rape is reported in greater Kansas City every other day -- and only 16% of all rapes are ever reported.
- Most sexual violence - over 50% - is committed by someone the victim knows, not by a stranger.
- Children, young women ages 15 to 25, and persons with developmental disabilities are the most frequent victims of sexual violence.

REDUCING THE RISK III VIDEO

Reducing the Risk Video III is a DVD which is ideal as training support to the Safe and Sacred Safe Program of the Kansas East United Methodist Conference. However, it is designed not only for individuals, but also for churches and staff parish committees, who also deal with administrative issues. Not all of the following ten segments will be viewed during this volunteer training, but the track titles are included in the event you would like to review the entire video later at your leisure. A copy of the video is found in each district office. (You may also go to www.ReducingTheRisk.com for more information

Child Protection as the Foundation of Your Ministry

A Victim's Story

Sexual Abuse in Faith Communities—An Expert Roundtable

Testimony of a Sex Offender

Screening & Selection: Your First line of Defense

Screening & Selection: The Candidate (a short film)

Legal Requirements: The Church's Responsibility to Protect Kids

Supervising Scenarios: What Would You Do?

Responding to an Allegation

Taking the Next Steps

Why is the church an easy target for abuse?

1. The church is a _____ friendly environment.
2. It is a _____ environment.
3. _____ with children is encouraged.
4. Churches welcome everyone and are _____.
5. Churches are _____ environments.
6. Insurance companies are experiencing a decrease in claims with clergy and an increase with _____ and _____.

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

Our role as individual leaders, as it pertains to abuse prevention, is three fold:

1. We need to know to recognize abuse and also inappropriate behavior that can be harmful.
2. We need to understand and respect boundaries.
3. We need to understand and be aware of power and vulnerability.

AREAS OF ABUSE

The four primary areas of abuse that we will be addressing are emotional, spiritual, physical and sexual.

Emotional Abuse: Abuse in which a person exposes a child to spoken and/or unspoken violence or emotional cruelty. Emotional abuse sends a message to the child of worthlessness, badness, and being not only unloved but undeserving of love and care. Children exposed to emotional abuse may have experienced being locked in a closet, being deprived of parental affection, being constantly told they are bad or stupid, or being allowed or forced to abuse alcohol or drugs. This type of abuse is very difficult to prove, but is devastating to the victim.

Physical Abuse: Any act of omission or an act that endangers a person's physical or mental health. This definition includes any non-accidental physical injury caused by a caretaker. Physical abuse may result from punishment that is overly punitive or inappropriate to the individual's age or condition. In addition, physical abuse may result from purposeful acts that pose serious danger to the physical health of a child, youth and/or adult with developmental disabilities.

Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse is the sexual exploitation or use of same for satisfaction of sexual drives. It includes but is not limited to: (1) incest, (2) rape, (3) prostitution, (4) any sexual intercourse, or deviant sexual conduct with, or fondling of a child, or youth and/or adult with developmental disabilities. Sexual Abuse means unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature, sexual conduct or sexualized behavior and may include, for example, touching, fondling, other physical contact and sexual relations.

Spiritual Abuse: Spiritual abuse may include, but is not limited to, breaking down one's belief system (cultural or religious); being punished or ridiculed for one's belief; preventing one from practicing their beliefs; abuse by a religious leader or abuse done in the name of, brought on by, or attributed to a belief system.

Persons who have been abused by the "hands of the church" may experience lifelong spiritual struggle and emotional trauma which is comparable to that of persons who are abused by a trusted family member or friend.

Why? Because . . .

- The Church represents God to them.
- Church people are "family".
- Church is a place of trust.
- The church is a safe and sacred space.

Like a city whose walls are broken down is a man who lacks self control.

Proverbs 25: 28

RELATIONAL BOUNDARIES

A boundary is an invisible protective fence around our personal space. Our service to others is guided by respecting their boundaries and honoring their trust. When we act in ways that use someone's vulnerability to satisfy our own personal needs, we have crossed boundaries inappropriately and betrayed a sacred trust.

A boundary is a gift. It gives shape to all our relationships. The type of relationship determines the guidelines for appropriate and inappropriate boundary crossing, not in a hierarchical way, but a way that prevents harmful or unhealthy behavior.

Boundary crossing is not a problem in and of itself; sometimes it is necessary and beneficial. Inappropriate boundary crossing or boundary violations that are unhealthy or harmful are to be avoided.

Determining whether boundary crossing is beneficial or harmful is often unclear.

The goal to behavior in a ministerial setting is to maintain the integrity of the ministerial relationship, and to protect our church community.

As ministers, we must be sensitive to and respectful of the boundaries of others. There must be transparency and accountability in ministry, meaning there are **no secrets**.

And, we must know our own boundaries. "Dual" relationships in ministry should be limited and there must be boundaries in dating and friendships.

We must know ourselves, our own boundaries, and be ever mindful of them.

BOUNDARY ISSUES and MISPLACED FEELINGS

Confusing the feelings one has about one person with feelings for another is often identified as transference.

- Transference adds to vulnerability
- When a spiritual leader uses an attachment to another person for their own gratification, they have stepped over a boundary inappropriately.

The inappropriate response to confused and misplaced feelings could be identified as counter transference.

- Counter transference distorts our perception of others, allowing us to interpret their behavior in a manner that meets our own needs.

TOUCH AND HUGS

There are times when we must wonder if it is ever appropriate to touch a child, youth, or another adult. The gift of touch is one that can offer healing, peace, and support.

- Touch is valuable and often necessary.
- We know that some touches can cause confusion, fear and shame.
- We must consider what the receiver's experiences might have been in the past, which will also affect how they receive a touch.
- Discerning when touch is in the best interest of the receiver is one of the challenges of ministry and spiritual leadership.

GOOD (WELCOME), BAD (UNWELCOME) OR CONFUSING TOUCH

(For further information, see page 23 – Good, Bad, Confusing Touch)

Good (or Welcome) Touch makes me feel . . .

- Good about who I am
- Affirmed
- Cared For
- Supported

Bad (or Unwelcome) Touch makes me feel . . .

- Harmed
- Disregarded
- Pain
- In Danger

Confusing touch makes me feel . . .

- Confused
- Mixed up
- Uncomfortable

- ✓ What may be a good touch for some is not a good touch for others.
- ✓ Know that there are different kinds of touch which may send a variety of unintended messages.
- ✓ For some children it is difficult to distinguish a good (or welcome) touch from a bad (or unwelcome) touch, or a confusing one. (Nonverbal behavior may also be confusing.)

Consider these questions about your own touching:

- Do you touch to share God's compassion or care?
- Does your need to touch stem from your own need or desire for affirmation?

SPIRITUALITY AND SEXUALIZED BEHAVIOR

Spirituality is the intimate connection between us and God.

Sexuality is the intimate connection between us and another person.

Sexualized behavior communicates sexual interest.

Understanding Intimacy:

- Intimacy is a God given gift.
- Sometimes the feelings of intimacy can become confused.
- As transmitters of that which is holy and sacred, spiritual leaders may become objects of sexual attraction.

Sexualized Behavior:

“Sexualized behavior” as used in this context is behavior which draws attention to the sexual dimension or makes it overt. When we engage in sexualized behavior, we are adding a sexual dimension to our interaction and, as “ministers”, we cross a boundary.

Ministerial Role and Cultural Differences:

- Sexualized behavior is NEVER appropriate in our role as spiritual leaders.
- Sexualized behavior should NEVER be rationalized in others.

Always be aware of **cultural differences** regarding what is considered provocative or inappropriate.

CROSSING BOUNDARIES

Ministry provides easy access for boundary crossing.

Many people in the ministerial role . . .

- Deal with people in emotional crisis
- Are privy to intimate details of their lives
- Have easy access and privilege of initiating contact with people
- Have access to privacy or lack of supervision
- Often have a flexible schedule
- Have power, prestige, influence
- Have personal qualities of sensitivity, warmth, attentiveness
- Have ambiguous role expectations

RESPONDING TO INAPPROPRIATE SEXUALIZED BEHAVIOR

- Use discretion; do not be confrontational or accusatory. It is generally best handled by a supervisor.
- Separate the behavior from the person.
- Define and describe the behavior. Use reasonable interpretation.
- Communicate concerns to a supervisor.

Matthew 18:6

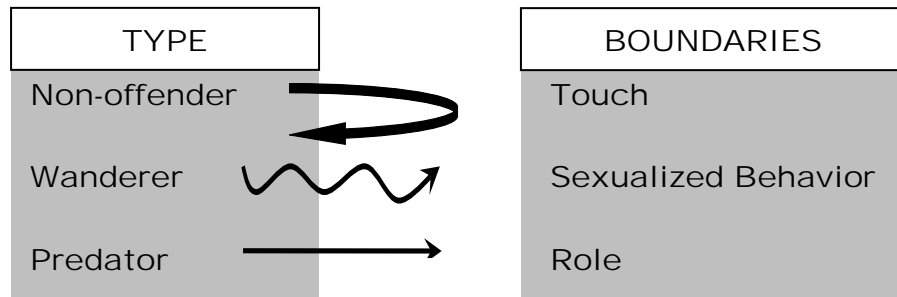
But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

IDENTIFY BOUNDARY CROSSING *

For discussion, individuals are identified in three categories; non-offender, wanderer, predator.

Boundary crossers are identified as wanderers and predators.

- **Non-offender:** when discovering himself or herself to be approaching a boundary, or to have crossed a boundary, they make a correction.
- **Wanderer:** approaches the boundaries obliquely – deliberately engaging in sexualized behavior but without an awareness of the boundaries. The discovery that he or she has crossed the boundary does not cause him or her to pull back.
- **Predator:** The predator heads straight for the boundaries, crossing them without hesitation.



Note that prevention can stop many wanderers, but not always predators. When prevention fails, then intervention is necessary and that is a responsibility of the church.

*Work of the Faith Trust Institute by Rev. Dr. Marie Fortune (formerly the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence)

TOUCH INTENTIONS

chart on page 24

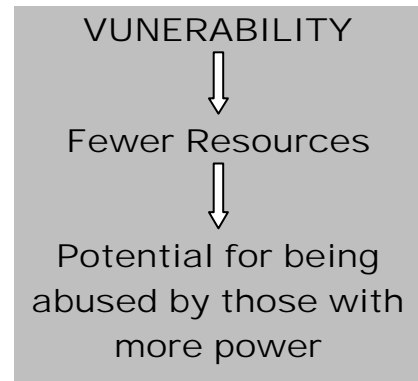
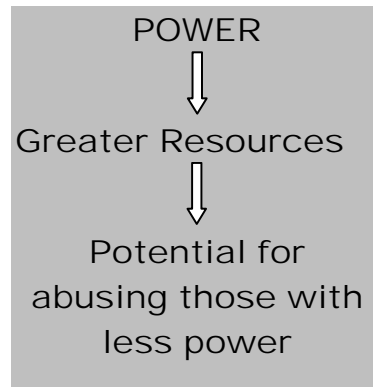
POWER AND VULNERABILITY

What is “power”? There are various forms of power (physical, political, force, etc.) Power is relative, and not absolute. People have power in their relationships with other people, and it is a rare person who is conscious of power dynamics or the balance of power in relationships. However, in the “ministerial” relationship, we must always be cognizant of the concept of power.

Three Kinds of Power – all inherent in the ministerial relationship.

- 1) Culturally conferred power
- 2) Secular/professional power
- 3) Sacred power

See definition of “minister” on page 21.



Additional information on the Power and Vulnerability chart on page 26

Sexual abuse happens when a person exerts his or her power over others in ways that are harmful. The abuser is powerful; the victim is vulnerable.

II Corinthians 4:1-2

. . . We refuse to wear masks and play games. We don't maneuver and manipulate behind the scenes. We don't twist God's word to suit ourselves. Rather, we keep everything we do and say out in the open, the whole truth on display, so that those who want to can see and judge for themselves in the presence of God.

The Message//Remix

MINISTERIAL RELATIONSHIP IS UNIQUE

- Parishioners, including children and youth share their vulnerable selves with “ministers”.
- They trust us to act with authority and purpose.
- They trust us to act in ways that help them.
- They trust us to help them know God.

People bring needs to the church

- To be heard
- To have values and beliefs affirmed
- To be challenged
- To be offered God's forgiveness
- To be encouraged
- To be held accountable
- To be comforted

RULES OF THE SEA AND THE CONCEPT OF POWER

- **SPEEDBOAT** is the “burdened” party
- Has power and control of movement
- Is obligated to avoid boats under sail
- Has the “burden” of responsibility

BURDEN

- **SAILBOAT** is the “privileged” party
- At the mercy of the wind; less control of movement
- Is vulnerable to power boats
- Has the “privilege” of being protected

PRIVILEGE

FaithTrust Institute March 2008

NOT JUST CONSENT...MEANINGFUL CONSENT

Often offenders will say that consent was given. Meaningful consent is not possible if there is a power differential.

There are no “excuses” for unethical behavior, including “meaningful consent.” Meaningful consent requires:

- Equality of resources
- Lack of coercion (direct or indirect) and the absence of fear
- Lack of constraints on choice
- The ability to say “no” (self confidence or maturity)
- Freedom to say “no” (not punished, rejected or shamed for saying “no”)

Meaningful consent is not possible when there is a power differential:

- Potential constraints on choice
- **Potential coercion**

CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS

Sexual behavior or sexualized contact within a ministerial relationship

IS UNETHICAL because:

- The ministerial relationship presupposes certain role expectations.
- Sexualized contact or sexualized behavior is NOT part of the ministerial role.
- The role of minister carries with it authority and power, and the responsibility to use this power to benefit the people whom we are serving.
- The power of the ministerial relationship and role can easily be misused.

See **BEST PRACTICES IN MINISTRY** on pages 27-31
Ministry specific recommendations and guidelines

PRESERVING BOUNDARIES THROUGH SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND SELF-CARE

- Get a life/Have a life.
- Find colleagues for study and support.
- Remember who you are and what you represent.
- Discover the joy of boundaries.

Exodus 18:18

You and these people
who come to you will
only wear yourselves
out. The work is too
heavy for you alone

GUIDELINES FOR LISTENING AND SUPPORTING

Disclosure of abuse may be made to you, whether the abuse occurred within or outside the walls of the church. What if a child/youth shares their story?

- Be honest! If asked to keep a secret, respond with honesty. For example, "I will keep everything you say between you and me unless I am concerned that you are being hurt, or might be hurt."
- Listen, and don't ask questions or deny the allegations.
- Remain calm and control your emotional response, i.e., facial expressions, body language, etc. Make sure the child is safe and let the child know you will help him/her.
- Make sure the child is safe and let the child know you will help him/her.
- Reassure the child in a meaningful way, but don't make promises.
- Follow the church/conference policies, but if there is any immediate concern call the local authorities (911 if necessary) and/or report to Child Protective Services (see page 14)
- Document your recollection of the conversation in writing as soon as possible and write down everything the child told you, using the child's words, particularly the anatomical words. Don't change their language or tell them the correct word for a body part.

What to say to children who disclose abuse . . .

- Thank you for telling me.
- I'm sorry this happened to you.
- It shouldn't have happened to a child.
- I'll do my best to get help for you and your family.
- How are you feeling right now?
- What are you most worried about?
- I think you are a very good, brave little boy/girl, and it's OK to be upset.

What NOT to say to children who disclose abuse . . .

- You can tell me anything; I promise I won't tell anyone else.
- I promise you, I will never let this happen to you again.
- Your father (mother, step-dad, etc.) is a terrible, sick person.
- Your father (mother, step-dad, etc.) will (should) go to jail for this.

TO BE AVOIDED:

- Any form of interrogation
- Any discussion of the abuse in front of other children

RECOGNIZING ABUSE

Recognizing abuse is part of our ministerial role. However, there are no easy “checklists.” In fact, any check list can be easily misinterpreted. Though we have included “Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse” on page 33 of this manual, use it with caution. It is important not to jump to conclusions.

Become familiar with the Kansas East Conference Reporting Procedures on the conference web site: www.kansaseast.org Read Article 15. Kansas Code for Care of Children, dealing with the reporting of abuse.

Review the following documents in the participant workbook pages 32-35

- Things adults can do to prevent sexually harmful behavior
- Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse
- What to watch for when adults are with children
- Signs that an adult or adolescent may be at-risk to abuse a child

When you have concerns beyond those raised through disclosure (discussed in previous section), you should:

- Keep a written record of the concerns.
- Separate the person from the behavior.
- Name specific behaviors that you have seen and state your reaction.
- Consult with supervisor, staff or clergy.
- If the concern is regarding clergy, go to the District Superintendent or contact the Kansas East Conference (Phone: 877-972-9111)

Remember! The ministerial role is to be aware, not diagnose.

HOW TO REPORT SUSPECTED ABUSE

- Make written notes of the “details” regarding the incident or disclosure. Details are very important in future reporting and documentation. (You will find a sample incident report form on the Kansas East Conference Web Site that may be helpful.)
- Follow the church and conference procedures on reporting, i.e., report any concerns to the program director of your ministry area, the staff member on site or clergy.
- Review and become familiar with the Kansas East Conference Procedures for Resolving Violations of Certification Policy - www.kansaseast.org
- Remember to treat “all” information with sensitivity and confidence. Note that feedback on reporting is not generally given.

Kansas Child Protective Services: If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected in Kansas, please contact the Kansas Protection Report Center (PRC) at **1-800-922-5330**. **Telephone lines at the Protection Report Center are staffed 24 hours a day.** In the event of an emergency contact your local law enforcement or call 911. Every call is taken seriously and every effort will be made to protect your identity.

CONSEQUENCES OF SEXUAL ABUSE

Consequences for the victim are both immediate and lifelong and may include:

- Guilt or shame
- Sense of isolation
- Depression
- Deep seated anger or hostility
- Suicidal thoughts
- Obsessive-compulsive behaviors
- Emotional numbing
- Dependency or control in relationships
- Learned helplessness
- Low self esteem
- Inability to play
- Flat affect
- Tendency toward self abuse Inability to trust
- Tendency toward victimization
- Denial
- Short term relationships (lack of long term commitment)
- Fear of Intimacy
- Immature emotions
- Generalized fear and anxiety
- Loss of memory about parts of childhood
- Grief over lost childhood
- Gravitating toward or creating chaos
- Constant flashbacks
- Feeling like “damaged goods”
- Sleep disturbances
- Somatic illness
- Disassociation (“spacing out” for significant periods of time without seizures)
- Gender confusion
- Phobias
- Sexualized behaviors
- Become adult victims of sexual assault, sexual maladjustment

Consequences of abuse – for the abuser

- Shame
- Guilt
- Legal liability
- Betrayal of calling
- Betrayal of ministry
- Betrayal of colleagues, co-workers, congregants trust
- Betrayal of professional integrity
- Loss of reputation & credibility
- Fear of further disclosures
- Possible loss of job, livelihood, family
- Violation of vows (marriage, celibacy)
- Disruption and/or loss of relationships (with victims, with congregants, with church)
- **IRONICALLY:** Promotion and outpouring of support from the congregation

Consequences of abuse – for the abuser’s family

- Possible relocation
- Confusion
- Anger
- Conflict
- Isolation
- Loss of economic stability
- Shame
- Denial

Consequences of abuse – for the congregation

- Public embarrassment
- Legal liability
- Erosion of ability to trust
- Loss of credibility with community and/or general public
- Congregants’ temptation to blame the victim
- Divisiveness, discord
- Loss of resources for ministry
- Sense of having been betrayed by the abuser
- Loss of confidence in the congregation’s ability to assess leadership
- Confusion and tension due to disparity between victim’s experience of abuser and congregants’ experience of abuser

Consequences of sexual abuse – for the ministry

- Loss of public credibility
- Loss of minister
- Legal liability
- De-evangelization Fear of Intimacy
- Damaged reputation in community
- Possible loss of member(s)
- Distrust of colleagues
- Confusion about appropriateness of touching

And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8

JUSTICE AND MERCY AND THE HOPE FOR HEALING *

Justice and mercy are an important part of our ministerial role.

- If a child or youth discloses abuse to a trusted spiritual teacher their response can make a difference in their life.
- When a victim discloses abuse, justice is necessary for healing to begin.
- Ministries can re-victimize their members depending on how they respond to an allegation.

In the **face of injustice** it is not unusual for victims to feel anger and frustration:

- With the legal system.
- With family members that want to forgive and forget.
- With offenders who are often permitted to keep offending while victims are held responsible.

In the midst of this **emotional time**:

- We long for healing, for restoration, for reconciliation.
- We use words like “justice” AND “forgiveness” because we hope it will accomplish what we long for.
- We hope that what is wrong will be made right in some way.
- We hope that what is broken will be make whole.

Some experience of justice is necessary in order for healing to take place, in order for a victim to become a survivor.

* *The concepts in this section are from FaithTrust Institute, by Dr. Marie Fortune*

SEVEN ELEMENTS OF JUSTICE MAKING

Justice making begins with truth telling!

1. Truth-Telling – Give voice to the reality of abuse.
2. Acknowledging the violation – hear the truth, name the abuse, and condemn it as wrong.
3. Compassion – Listen and suffer with the victim.
4. Protecting the vulnerable – take steps to prevent further abuse.
5. Accountability – confront the abuser and impose negative consequences; this step makes repentance possible.
6. Restitution – make symbolic restoration of what was lost; give tangible means to acknowledging the wrongfulness of the abuse and harm done, and to bring about healing.
7. Vindication – set the victim free from suffering caused by the abuse.

*Justice Making – additional information on page 25 of the workbook.

Abuse is wrong because:

- It is a misuse of power to the detriment of one who does not have power.
- It is a violation of role.
- It results in a breaking of trust and teaches children not to trust in intimate relationships.
- Abuse violates the right relationship that should exist.
- Right relation means a relationship based on trust, respect, safety and protection of the vulnerable to life circumstances.

* The concepts of this section are from the Faith Trust Institute,
And the work of Rev. Dr. Marie Fortune

IN SUMMARY

- *Abuse prevention* encompasses much more than screening to identify offenders and predators.
- *Abuse prevention* is a proactive approach to protecting all who are in ministry with children, youth and/or the developmentally disabled in our faith community.
- *Abuse prevention* addresses the importance of sensitivity in our relationships in the ministerial setting. It teaches us to be aware of boundaries of ourselves and others.
- *Abuse prevention* reaches beyond the walls of the church and into the community.

Abuse prevention:

- Educates us and raises awareness regarding the signs of abuse and how abuse impacts victims, their families, and the church community.
- Requires conducting background and reference checks on all volunteers and staff that have contact with children, youth and/or the developmentally disabled.
- Protects the integrity of volunteers and staff.
- Communicates the “Best Practices,” policies and guidelines for the protection of children, youth and/or the developmentally disabled.

During this training we have reviewed

- Why we are here
- Goal and Focus of the Training
- Reducing the Risk video
- Areas of Abuse
- Boundaries and their importance
- Touch and Hugs
- Spirituality and Sexualized Behavior
- Boundary Crossing
- Power and Vulnerability
- Ministerial Relationships
- Conduct and Expectations
- Listening and Supporting
- Recognizing Abuse
- Consequences of Abuse
- Justice, Mercy and Healing

SCRAMBLE QUIZ

1. The goal of Safe and Sacred Space Training is to maintain the _____ of the ministerial role.
2. As spiritual leaders, we need to:
 - a. Know how to _____ abuse and inappropriate behavior that can be harmful.
 - b. Understand and respect _____.
 - c. Understand and be aware of the concept of _____ and _____ in our ministerial relationships.
3. Ministry provides easy access for _____.
4. A _____ is a gift and gives shape to our relationships.
5. In ministry our only motivation for _____ is to share God's compassion or care.
6. _____ is the intimate connection between us and God.
7. The rules of the sea and the concept of power states an _____ not a judgment.
8. _____ is not possible if there is a power differential.
9. Recognizing abuse is part of our ministerial role. We must remember that our role is to be _____, not _____.
First and foremost, we must _____.
10. Some experience of _____ is necessary for healing to take place.

Insert one of the following words in the blank spaces above

justice

touch

listen

boundary crossing

spirituality

expectation

integrity

recognition

power

vulnerability

boundary

aware

meaningful consent

diagnose

recognize

boundaries

CLOSING WORDS AND PRAYER

The Knight's Prayer, from *A Book of Hours*

“God be in my head,
And in my understanding;
God be in mine eyes,
And in my looking;
God be in my mouth,
And in my speaking;
God be in my heart,
And in my thinking;
God be at mine end,
And at my departing.”

Lord,

As we leave this place, help us to carry with us all that we have heard and seen and learned today. Heighten our awareness as you grow us in compassion.

Amen

THANK YOU for serving and taking time to be here today!

Before you leave, please complete all forms, specifically Form F – the Verification Form, which includes the covenant.

Also, we take your feedback seriously, so please complete the evaluation form!

DEFINITIONS AND TERMS – SAFE & SACRED SPACE PROGRAM

Boundary	Invisible protective fence around personal space. A boundary indicates limitations.
Counter transference	Inappropriate response to transference. Distorts our perception of others allowing the recipient of transferred feelings to interpret the misplaced feelings to meet their own needs.
Direct/Indirect Contact	<p>Direct contact means anyone who is in a direct supervisory role, <i>or anyone who might have the likelihood of being alone with a child, youth and/or adult with developmental disabilities, but who is not in a direct supervisory role with these persons.</i> These include (but not limited to) Sunday School teachers, youth group leaders, VBS leaders, camp counselors, child care (nursery) workers, musicians, clergy, scout leaders, parents who transport children, youth and/or adults with developmental disabilities, chaperones, custodian/facility, etc.</p> <p>Persons who have <i>indirect contact</i> with children, youth and/or adults with developmental disabilities, and <i>do not have the likelihood of being alone with one of these individuals would not need to be certified.</i> This includes (but is not limited to) persons such as parents who come to a youth group meeting to serve a meal under the supervision of the youth leader or other certified worker, parents who only transport children, youth and/or adults with developmental disabilities <i>with the presence of an additional adult who is a certified worker.</i></p>
Emotional Abuse	Abuse in which a person exposes a child to spoken and/or unspoken violence or emotional cruelty. Emotional abuse sends a message to the child of worthlessness, badness, and being not only unloved but undeserving of love and care. Children exposed to emotional abuse may have experienced being locked in a closet, being deprived of parental affection, being constantly told they are bad or stupid, or being allowed or forced to abuse alcohol or drugs. This type of abuse is very difficult to prove, but is devastating to the victim.
Hostile Environment	Inappropriate use of sexually explicit words, gestures, or images.
Minister(s)	Persons who act as representatives of the church in any capacity. This means lay and professional; Pastor, Sunday School teacher, Youth Advisor, Camp Counselor, Choir Director, etc. The term "ministerial" is used to refer to the relationships of authority and trust in which these persons are involved.
Neglect	Abuse in which a person endangers a child's health, safety, or welfare through negligence. Neglect may include withholding food, clothing, medical care, education, and even affection and affirmation of the child's self worth.
Physical Abuse	Any act of omission or an act that endangers a person's physical or mental health. This definition includes any non-accidental physical injury caused by a caretaker. Physical abuse may result from punishment that is overly punitive or inappropriate to the individual's age or condition. In addition, physical abuse may result from purposeful acts that pose serious danger to the physical health of a child, youth or adult with developmental disabilities.
Power	The ability or capacity to perform or act effectively. Strength or force exerted or capable of being exerted; might. The ability or official capacity to exercise control; authority. A person, group, or nation having influence or control over others. Forcefulness, effectiveness.

Seductive Behavior	Behavior that is inappropriate and offensive without threat of repercussion.
Sexual Abuse	<p>Sexual abuse is the sexual exploitation or use of same for satisfaction of sexual drives. It includes but is not limited to: 1) incest, 2) rape, 3) prostitution, 4) any sexual intercourse, or deviant sexual conduct with, or fondling of a child, youth and/or adult with developmental disabilities. Sexual abuse means unwanted physical contact of a sexual nature, sexual conduct or sexualized behavior and may include, for example, touching, fondling, other physical contact and sexualized relations.</p> <p><i>Any sexual activity with a child whether in the home by a caretaker, in a day care situation, a foster/residential setting, or in any other setting, including on the street by a person unknown to the child. The abuser may be an adult, an adolescent, or another child, provided the child is four years older than the victim (National Resource Center on Child Sexual Abuse).</i></p>
Sexual Coercion	Coercion of sexual activity by threat of punishment.
Sexual Harassment:	Any unwanted sexual advance or demand, either verbal or physical, which is reasonably perceived by the recipient as demeaning, intimidating, or coercive. Sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship rather than as an exclusively sexual issue. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the creation of a hostile or abusive working environment resulting from discrimination on the basis of gender.
Sexual Imposition	Gross imposition like prolonged gazing, fondling, grabbing, assault, or rape
Sexual Misconduct	The abuse of power through sexual conduct or activity, not limited to sexual intercourse, in which one violates the free choice or abuses the vulnerability of another.
Spiritual Abuse	Spiritual abuse may include, but is not limited to: breaking down one's belief system (cultural or religious), being punished or ridiculed for one's belief, preventing one from practicing their beliefs, abuse by a religious leader, or abuse done in the name of, brought on by, or attributed to a belief system.
Supervised Setting	Supervised setting means there is the presence of two or more unrelated adults present at all times in a closed setting (i.e., cabin, classroom with no window or with door closed, motor vehicle, office, choir room, etc.); or one adult in an open setting with other adults around (i.e., classes in Fellowship Hall with dividers, playground, Lifeguard at pool, etc.) No child should be alone with one adult.
Transference	To convey (transmit or communicate) the feelings a person has for one person to another person. Confusing and/or misplaced feelings.
Unsupervised Setting	Unsupervised setting means there is one adult present in a closed setting (i.e., classroom with no windows and/or open door, motor vehicle, office, etc.)

THE ELEMENT OF CHOICE

GOOD, BAD, CONFUSING TOUCH*

Touches can be good, bad and confusing

GOOD TOUCHES

Good touches are touches that make the receiver feel affirmed – good about himself or herself. Good touches are experienced by the receiver as warm, caring, nurturing, and supportive.

BAD TOUCHES

Bad touches are touches that hurt the receiver – touches that make the receiver feel bad about herself or himself, touches that inflict pain or that seem to disregard the receiver's feelings. Bad touches are experienced by the receiver as manipulative, coercive, abusive, and frightening.

CONFUSING TOUCHES

Confusing touches are touches that make the receiver feel uncomfortable, uneasy, confused, and unsure. The receiver experiences confusion and conflicting feelings about the touch and/or the person who does the touching.

WHAT DETERMINES THE NATURE OF A TOUCH?

Whether a touch is “good,” “bad,” or “confusing” is determined by how the receiver experiences it – NOT by the intentions of the person doing the touching. The “toucher” may intend the touch to convey a certain kind of message (support, affection, etc.). However, the message is entirely dependent upon how the receiver perceives the touch, and the toucher has no control over this. **The toucher's intentions are irrelevant.**

THE ELEMENT OF CHOICE

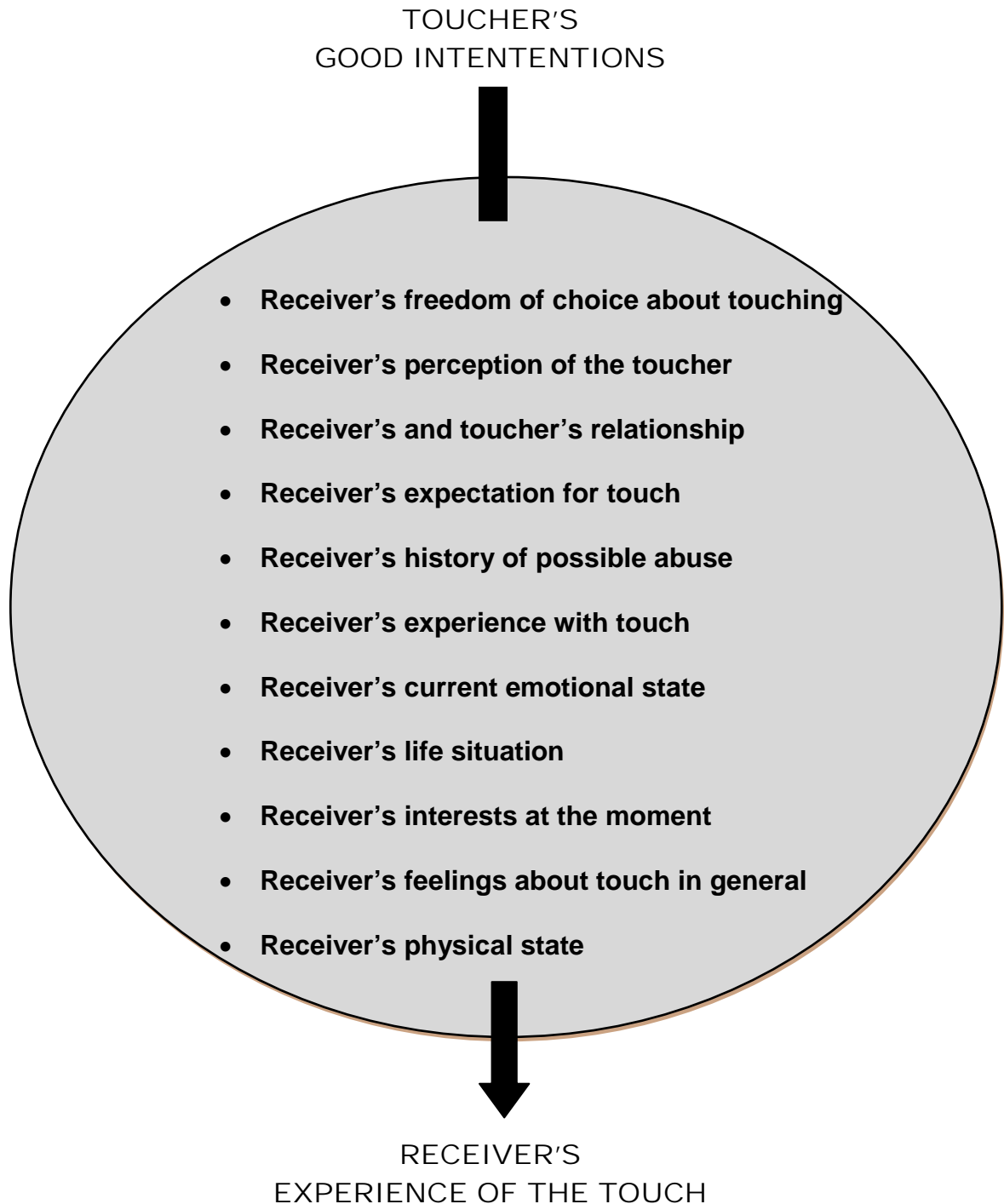
Foremost in how the receiver experiences a touch is the element of choice; does the receiver have a choice in the matter of whether or not to be touched? Is the touch offered, or forced upon the receiver, perhaps on the assumption that the receiver wants to be touched? Is the receiver free to accept or decline the offer? Touch that is not freely chosen by the receiver is likely to be experienced as a “bad” or “confusing” touch.

This page is based on the Touch Continuum as presented by Cordelia Anderson in *The Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Guidebook*, Sexual Assault Services Hennepin Court Attorney's Office, Minneapolis, MN 1979. The Touch Continuum has been further developed through dance and theater presentations to groups of children.

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* The words “welcome” and “unwelcome” were added for further clarification.

WHY INTENTIONS ARE NOT THE KEY TO GOOD TOUCH, BAD TOUCH, CONFUSING TOUCH



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JUSTICE-MAKING

1. **Truth Telling** happens when the silence surrounding the secret of abuse is broken. Truth-telling is not merely a rendition of the facts; it is giving voice to a reality. When victims can give voice to their specific experiences of violation, the secret loses its potency. The victims finally feel safe enough to come forward and tell their stories to others. The victims are still at great risk, and require protection from the abuser's intimidation.
2. **Acknowledging the Violation:** For justice to be awakened and informed by truth-telling, the truth told of violation must also be truth heard. The institution to whom the truth is spoken must be able to hear and believe in order to act. In hearing the truth, the institution acknowledges the violation that has occurred. The absence of acknowledging the cruelty of injustice serves to justify the maltreatment. Simple as it is, verbal acknowledgment conveys a depth of understanding and compassion that cannot be accomplished in any other way.

Official acknowledgement can be communicated by a procedure that is put into play immediately upon receipt of information that has been done. Appropriate procedures clearly convey to the victims that the institution is taking the situation seriously. Adjudication of the allegations through this process can provide vindication for the victims, the broadest possible acknowledgement of their experience.

3. **Compassion** is the willingness to "suffer with" another person coupled with the desire to alleviate the suffering. Often in our own discomfort at another's circumstances, we try to minimize, explain away, or avoid their suffering. We may tell ourselves that it is out of our concern for their pain that we do these things, but in fact, it comes from our own discomfort. We simply want to avoid sharing another's suffering. We wish the problem would go away. Compassion is the willingness to be present, acknowledging and listening, even when we cannot solve the problem.
4. **Protecting the Vulnerable** from further abuse is a work of justice and mercy. Once we are aware of the potential for abuse, it is incumbent upon us to do all that we can to prevent further harm – to anyone! When we knowingly allow harm to continue, we are colluding in it.
5. **Accountability** is the focus of Jesus' teaching in Luke 17:1-4: "If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him . . ." All institutions have the right to expect their employees to be accountable. Accountability begins with confrontation and expects repentance. Negative consequences may be punitive, but they may be the most direct route to true repentance. Willard Gaylin argues that "those of us who transgress have a right to receive punishment; if we are not punished adequately for our crimes, we are being treated as less than persons . . . As a tribute and testament to (the aggressor's) freedom we must dignify them by making them pay for the evil actions they commit. We show our respect by making them accountable."
6. **Restitution**, making payment for damages, is a concrete means of renewing right-relation. Not only does material restitution help pay for the actual expenses often incurred by victims (for example, the cost of therapy), it also carries a symbolic meaning. It is a tangible effort to restore that which was lost when the offenses occurred. Although restitution is usually made in financial payment for injury suffered, it can also refer to less tangible forms of restoration. For example, taking responsibility for the harm done can restore the victim's reputation in a community, and provide sympathy from other persons. This can bring about renewal of right-relation between the victim and other employees or members of the institution.
7. **Vindication:** Ultimately, vindication for victims is the substance of justice and mercy. Vindication refers not to vengeance and retaliation, but to exoneration and justification of those who have experienced harm, made legitimate complaints, and consequently have been imputed. The absolute definition of vindication is "to set free." Surely the physical, emotional, and spiritual key to healing from violation is to be set free from the multiple layers of suffering it creates. This is the promise given by Jesus in the parable of the persistent widows: "And will not God vindicate the elect, who cry to God day and night?"

The above material for the Seven Elements of Justice-Making came out of the book "Is Nothing Sacred," by Marie M. Fortune, copyrighted 1999. They are used with permission from the FaithTrust Institute.

POWER and VULNERABILITY

Power is something that we all have at one time or another, and in some situation or another. It is more than physical strength, money, or influence. People have power in their relationships with other people, and it is a rare person who is conscious of the power dynamics or the balance of power in their relationships. With power comes responsibility. The person with the greater power in a relationship is responsible for using that power ethically. When “ministers” are unaware of the power inherent in their position and role, there is danger that they may use their power irresponsibly.

“Power” itself is neutral, neither good nor bad, neither positive nor negative. The same is true with “vulnerable.” Many persons resist the idea that they have power, or if they do realize it they insist that they have renounced their power. They may even see themselves as being vulnerable.

One of the helpful ways to understand the concept of “power and vulnerability” is to understand the difference between “power over” and “power to do/act/make.” Power is not absolute; it is relative. You may have power over an individual, but some other individual may have power over you. Power is also contextual. A pastor in the pulpit holds more power than the congregant. However, a congregant on the Staff Parish Relations Committee can be in a more powerful position than the pastor when the Committee is considering financial compensation.

People have the source of power or source of vulnerability based on certain characteristics. Below are some of those characteristics.

	<u>Sources of Power</u>	<u>Sources of vulnerability</u>
Role	Clergy	Laity
Age	Adult	Child, Youth, Old Age
Gender	Male	Female
Sexual Orientation	Heterosexual	Gay, Lesbian
Race	Caucasian	Asian, Native American, African American, Hispanic
Physical Resources	Large Size, Ability, Strength	Small Size, Disability, Weakness
Economic Resources	Wealth, Job Skills	Poverty, Lack of Job Skills
Intellectual Resources	Knowledge, Access to Information	Lack of Knowledge and Information
Psychological Resources	Breadth and Depth of Life Experiences	Inexperience, History of Abuse, Lack of Coping Skills
Social Resources	Support, Community, Contacts, Achievement, Status	Isolation
Life Circumstances	Security, Well-being	Need, Crisis
Religion	Christian	Jewish, Islamic, Buddhist, etc.

Safe and Sacred Space

“BEST PRACTICES” IN MINISTRY

Guidelines, Policies and Procedures

For the purpose of maintaining transparency, accountability, and integrity in ministry with children, youth and/or the developmentally disabled.

A Ministry of the
Kansas East Conference
Of
The United Methodist Church

2008 Revised Issue

“BEST PRACTICES” FOR CHILDREN’S MINISTRY

Guidelines, Policies and Procedures – Children, Age 0 – Grade 5

During all children’s programming and events caregivers should wear the appropriate lanyard/nametag. Remember guidelines also apply to your own child while you are in your ministerial role.

Security Guidelines:

- Minimum of two unrelated care providers at all times. Care providers should not be alone with a child.
- Care providers should always have supervision or a witness present when with a child of same or opposite sex for a sustained period of time.
- Release only (birth-3rd grade) to a person with a proper receipt claim. In cases of lost receipt or any problems, the child may be released by a staff member.

Discipline Guidelines:

- Praising specific behaviors you want to see in your group (i.e., “good listening”, “thank you for waiting”).
- Corporal punishment of any kind is never appropriate.
- A firm gentle voice addressing and redirecting the behavior (i.e., “you are running; walk, please”). Any words or tone that would cause a child to think he/she is a “problem”, rather than a specific behavior being addressed (i.e., screaming at a child).
- *Any words that could cause feelings of condemnation or shame about any aspect of their person . . . including degrading references to anything physical, emotional, mental, or position (or station) in life, such as saying, “Are you a strong boy? Strong boys don’t cry.” Or “Shame on you.”*
- Confidential parental discussion when necessary.
- Age appropriate “time outs” or withdrawal from activity.

Physical Contact Guidelines:

- Appropriate physical contact of: non-demanding, gentle touch of shoulders, hands, arms, head or back; sitting child on leg (appropriate only at preschool or kindergarten age level); “high fives” or shaking hands, if gentle.
- Inappropriate physical contact of: kissing; demanding hugs and kisses; touching chest, genital region, upper legs, buttocks, waist, stomach; sitting child in center of your lap; sitting child between legs; sitting child above age 6 on one or both legs; opposite sex piggy back rides; seductiveness or suggestive contact.
- Physical contact of any kind which is done for the pleasure or satisfaction of care providers is never appropriate.
- Any touching used to express power or control over a child is not permitted.

Bathroom Procedures:

At ANY age, it is inappropriate to be alone with a child, especially in the bathroom.

Infant: Diapering should be done in the Nursery by a parent/legal guardian or by a paid staff person only. Diapering in a secluded area or without the presence of other care providers; bathroom doors closed is never permitted.

Toddler-Potty Training: If a toddler has an “accident” in underwear/clothing, only the parent/legal guardian may change the clothing (a child must be accident free for 3 consecutive weeks prior to wearing underwear in Nursery Care). Volunteers and staff are not to change underwear/clothing after an “accident”.

2 to 5 year old: Permission is granted to use bathroom unless special help is required. After the care provider has ensured that the bathroom is clear, the care provider should wait outside the bathroom door, which will remain slightly open. Child may require some assistance. Care providers should never be in a closed door situation with a child or “Help” without a request for assistance from the child.

Kindergarten Age or Older: Permission granted to use facility; unless special help (if a child has temporary physical limitations, i.e., broken arm, crutches, etc.) is required. After the care provider has ensured that the bathroom is clear, the care provider should wait outside the bathroom door, which will remain slightly open. Care giver should never be in a closed door situation with a child or accompany a child inside the bathroom when special help is not required.

“BEST PRACTICES” FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

Guidelines, Policies and Procedures – Youth, Grades 6-12

During youth programs and events all adults in the programming area need to wear lanyards or visitor name tags.

Guidelines for Conduct with Students

Meeting with Students

- All meetings, gatherings, and events associated with Youth Ministry will adhere to a two unrelated adult minimum rule.
- On the occasion when a worker needs to meet individually with a student of the same gender outside of regularly scheduled programs, *parental consent must first be obtained*. All meetings must occur in a public place where other people are present. Some examples of public places where other people are gathered include restaurants and coffee shops. Students and workers will meet at the public place and depart from the public place separately. If a meeting occurs during regularly scheduled program time, it must be in a common visible area in a place where other people are present. Under no circumstances shall any worker meet privately with an individual student of the opposite gender.
- When providing rides to students, youth workers should have a third person in the car. Although situations may require the driver to be alone in the car with a student of the same gender (e.g. picking up the first student) this should be the exception rather than the norm and parental consent must be obtained. Care should be taken to *plan ahead* to avoid finding oneself in these situations. *Under no circumstances shall any worker be alone in a car with an individual student of the opposite gender*.
- As a rule, youth workers shall not be alone in a home or building with an individual student. If the situation becomes unavoidable (e.g. a student is the first to arrive or last to be picked up), the adult shall wait with the student outside the home or building. In bad weather, when meeting off site, the adult may leave the main entry or front door open and remain inside with the student in the front room or entryway. If this situation occurs, please report it to the youth ministry staff member in charge of that program as soon as possible.
- In group sleeping arrangements (e.g. camp cabins, ski trips, mission trips) *two unrelated adults must be present* with any number of students during the stated “lights out” time. Under no circumstances shall any worker share a bed with a student. In dorm or hotel settings, students and adults will sleep in separate rooms. Room checks will be performed at stated lights out time.
- A minimum leader to student ratio of 1:12 will be observed on any overnight event. Any leader who is a minor must be under direct adult supervision at all times. A leader who is a minor must be at least four years older than the students participating in the event in order to be considered a leader.

Physical Touch

- Although physical affection can have an appropriate place in ministry, workers shall use discretion as to the frequency and type of physical affection they provide to students of either gender. Specifically, youth workers should refrain from giving or receiving massages of any type. Whenever possible front-to-front hugs should be avoided. Workers should never have students sit on their laps or vice-versa. Kissing of any sort is inappropriate. Touching should be in response to the need of the student and not the need of the adult. It should generally be in response to a student’s initiative. A worker shall never touch a student’s breasts, buttocks, or groin.
- Corporal punishment is never permissible. Physical restraint should be used only in order to protect the health and welfare of the student, other students, volunteers or staff.

Communication

- Unless youth ministry staff requests differently, all phone calling, letter writing, e-mailing, text messaging and instant messaging should be to students of the same gender. There will be occasions when an exception to this rule might surface. Please contact the staff person who oversees your area of ministry to discuss any exceptions before they are made. We want to be able to support you and be “in the know” should a parent contact us with concerns.

Modesty

- You are an example to students in every way. For that reason, we expect that your dress, behavior, and body language be of the highest standard. Please be conscious of what your appearance will speak to both genders.

Disciplinary Action

If at any time your behavior towards students becomes questionable or specific expectations outlined here are violated, the steps below will be taken by youth ministry staff.

- A meeting will be scheduled with the staff member overseeing the program in which you are volunteering. The action in question will be discussed and the guidelines in this policy will be reviewed and resigned. If it is determined that questionable behavior has occurred, the Director of Youth Ministry and other appropriate staff members will be contacted and will become involved.
- If questionable behavior continues after the meeting, a temporary or permanent removal from your volunteer position will follow.
- If behavior warrants immediate removal from volunteer position, staff reserves the right to enforce disciplinary action as needed.
- In all situations, we will communicate our purpose in discipline and keep it in confidence within the church guidelines.
- **If you become aware of other volunteers or staff violating these guidelines, report the situation immediately to a staff member or pastor.**

Youth ministry has a profound moral and legal obligation to reduce the possibility of abuse from ever occurring. This policy has been formed with that obligation in mind. Abuse causes deep and sometimes lifelong psychological damage to its victims and their families. Furthermore, when abuse occurs in the context of a Christian organization, the reputations of the organization, its staff and other volunteers are jeopardized. Thank you for your support and partnership in adhering to what is outlined in these pages so that students for years to come can grow in Christ in a safe and trustworthy environment.

“BEST PRACTICES” FOR DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED

Guidelines, Policies and Procedures – Children, Youth and Adults with Special Needs

What Volunteers need to know about persons with special needs.

General Approach. For years, people with disability were segregated from the rest of society. Because of federal legislation, persons with disability are being integrated into the mainstream of education, employment, and community activities. The present generation is growing up in situations where people with disability are a natural part of school, church and community life. Below are some general principles to keep in mind when working with the special needs population.

Accept people with special needs for who they are. Persons with disability need to be treated, as much as possible, like any other person created by God and designed for a purpose. The world at large is mainly inhabited by people with the ability to see, hear, speak, and move about freely. People with disability need to practice meeting the standards of the "normal" world while they are growing up so they can gain confidence and independence. A person with a special need may be slower physically or mentally, but take time to get to know them.

People with disability do not need to be pitied. If you perceive a person with a disability as someone to be pitied, someone from whom little should be expected or demanded, probably little will come. If, on the other hand, you expect the person to succeed and grow, to learn to act independently, then chances are good that the person will grow to become successful and independent

Help a person with special needs only when help is needed. A person with a special need may take longer to complete a certain task, but you may be surprised by what he or she can do. Too much help can become a hindrance if it robs the person of opportunities to learn and practice independence. Do not assume that a task cannot be done, and do not redo work that is not perfect. Ask if help is wanted before providing it.

With special considerations, communicate with a special needs person like you would any other person. One impairment that some volunteers have trouble with involves speech and language. Whether the communication impairment results from a physical disability such as cerebral palsy or a speech disability such as stuttering, the listener tends to anticipate what the disabled person is trying to say and not allow that person the time he or she needs to communicate. This should be avoided. Be patient, and remember that a person with a speech impairment has had to communicate with people other than you.

Whenever possible, speak directly to persons with disability, using their name. Do not limit your conversation only to the parent or companion. Speak clearly and slowly, not necessarily loudly. A person with a speech impairment is not necessarily hearing impaired. Remember that a warm smile and friendly greeting are very reassuring.

There are special considerations for people with special disabilities. For example, keep in mind that people who have visual impairments depend upon what they hear and touch to bring them information about their surroundings. Provide opportunities for the visually impaired person to handle things that those with normal vision can simply look at. It is also helpful to describe new people, things, and events as they come into the person's environment. Allow time for the person to ask what is going on.

People with hearing impairments must depend on sight for most of their knowledge. Make sure the hearing impaired person can see the face of whoever is speaking; many cues are picked up through lip-reading and facial expression.

Arrange for seating near the teacher or leader. Do not assume that a person understands you just because you have his or her attention. Ask whether you have been understood.

People with mental impairments can get along better when directions are short and clearly stated. Break down tasks into a series of steps that can be completed in sequence. Maintain a routine, teach new procedures, and give time for practice.

EXPECTATIONS OF VOLUNTEERS

- **Meet and greet your child/student and family.**
Welcome them and check for any last minute instructions or information that we might need.
- **Participate.**
All volunteers and participants are expected to participate, as much as possible, in the activities of the day.
- **Stay together.**
Talk with them, encourage them and include them in whatever is happening in the programming or class.
- **Bathroom breaks with a child.**
Need two unrelated volunteers to accompany the child to the bathroom. If the participant can't go alone, simply wait for them, at the door of the bathroom.
- **Help with snacks/meals.**
Some of our participants will need help carrying things, cutting food into manageable pieces and cleaning up after themselves.
- **Have fun!** This ministry is a great experience for those who attend.

In each of the volunteer areas, you will receive training and instruction for the special needs person that you will be assisting. A member of the Ministry staff will provide ongoing support and communication. Church staff members are always on-site and experienced volunteers are available at all times.

DRESS CODE

Requested dress code is as follows:

- Jeans in good condition and maintained at waistline.
- No baggy pants with underwear or boxers visible.
- Shorts and skirts must be longer than fingertip length when standing.
- Shorts must be appropriate for a church setting. No gym shorts or cut offs.
- Any writing on shirts should be appropriate for church, no negative messages.
- No midriff skin can be showing (including when arms are raised above head).
- No halter-tops, strapless tops, tank tops with less than 2" wide straps.
- No visible body piercing other than earrings.

THINGS ADULTS CAN DO TO PREVENT SEXUALLY HARMFUL BEHAVIOR BETWEEN CHILDREN

- 1. Set and respect physical boundaries.** Make sure that all members of family/group have rights to privacy in dressing, bathing, sleeping, and other personal activities. As adults we are responsible for modeling the boundaries we want children to honor. Even young children should be respected and their preferences accommodated when possible.
- 2. Encourage children to also respect themselves and others.** Much of what young people see in the adult world ignores or even ridicules the importance of treating others respectfully and of demanding the same for oneself. Highly-sexualized images in advertising, music lyrics, video games and films can sometimes make it difficult for adolescents—or even young children—to distinguish between innocent experimentation and sexually harmful behaviors. Teach children to value respectful interactions—including sexual interactions. Create environments at home and in your social groups where children will see that emotionally or sexually aggressive behaviors are not tolerated and that hurtful behaviors are challenged.
- 3. Demonstrate to children that it is all right to say “no” and that they need to accept “no” from others.** Teach children when it is okay to say “no”—for example when they do not want to play, or be tickled, hugged or kissed. Help them understand what is considered acceptable and unacceptable behavior. Encourage them to always speak up if someone acts in a way that makes them uncomfortable, even if they were unable to object or to say “no” at the time. Teach children that they must listen to and accept others’ limits as well.
- 4. Stay aware of how children are interacting with one another.** Be alert to the warning signs that your child, or another child or young person, may be acting in ways that make it difficult for other children to set a limit, or in ways that are sexually aggressive or abusive. Seek information and help as soon as you feel uncomfortable. Don’t keep it a secret.
- 5. Talk with children, and listen to what they have to say.** Adults and adolescents who sexually abuse children usually rely on secrecy. They often try to silence children and to build trust with adults, counting on them to be silent if they are confused. The first step to breaking through this secrecy is to develop an open and trusting relationship with children. This means listening carefully to their fears and concerns and letting them know they should not worry about telling you anything. It is important to talk with them about sexuality, offer accurate answers to their questions, and to be comfortable using correct terms for parts of the body.
- 6. Set clear guidelines and keep a careful eye on children’s Internet and video game use and the TV shows and movies they watch.** Explain to children the risks associated with using the Internet, restrict access to sites that are not age-appropriate, and ask them to tell you if they receive messages or emails containing suggestive or sexually explicit material. Keep computers in a public place so you can easily monitor their use. Check that TV shows, films and videos are age-appropriate. Watch programs with children and use what they see as “teachable moments” to share information and values. Make agreements with other adults that the guidelines of a visiting child’s parents or guardians will be respected during play dates or visits.
- 7. Take sensible precautions about whom you choose to take care of your children.** Be thoughtful about whom you choose to care for your children. Find out as much as you can about baby-sitters and don’t leave your child with anyone you have doubts about. If your child is unhappy about spending time with a particular person, talk to the child about his or her concerns.
- 8. Regularly remind children of other trusted adults whom they can talk to.** Sometimes the child or young person whose behavior concerns us is a close family member or the son or daughter of a friend. In those situations, it may be especially painful for us, as parents and caregivers, to admit what may be happening. It may be even harder for a child to tell that someone the family cares about is harming her or him. An adult outside the immediate family is often in a better position to acknowledge concerns and to take protective actions.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

Some of these behavioral signs can have explanations other than abuse. Life situations, such as divorce, death of a family member, friend or pet, or problems at school, can be very stressful to children, causing some of the behavioral signs below. Warning: Any single sign doesn't mean a child has been abused and it is important not to jump to conclusions when a child's behavior changes. However, if a majority is present, and a child's behavior has changed dramatically, the situation should be explored more fully.

- Nightmares, sleep problems, extreme fears without an obvious explanation
- Sudden or unexplained personality changes; seems withdrawn, angry, moody, clingy, "checked-out" or shows significant changes in eating habits
- An older child behaving like a younger child (for example, bedwetting or thumb-sucking)
- Develops fear of certain places or resists being alone with an adult or young person for unknown reasons
- Shows resistance to routine bathing, toileting or removing clothes even in appropriate situations
- Play, writing, drawings or dreams of sexual or frightening images
- Refuses to talk about a secret he or she has with an adult or older child
- Stomach aches or illness, often with no identifiable reason
- Leaves clues that seem likely to provoke a discussion about sexual issues
- Uses new or adult words for body parts
- Engages in adult-like sexual activities with toys, objects or other children
- Develops special relationship with older friends that may include unexplained money, gifts or privileges
- Intentionally harms himself or herself, for example, drug/alcohol use, cutting, burning, running away, sexual promiscuity
- Becomes increasingly secretive around use of the Internet or cell phone
- Develops physical symptoms such as unexplained soreness, pain or bruises around genital or mouth, sexually-transmitted disease, or pregnancy

SIGNS THAT AN ADULT MAY BE AT-RISK TO SEXUALLY ABUSE A CHILD

Someone you care about may be acting in ways that worry you. These behaviors may indicate a risk to sexually abuse a child or may be a way for this person to ask for help. Many people with sexual behavior problems wish someone had asked them what was going on or had told them where to call. Inappropriate behaviors may become abusive if the individual does not get the help he or she needs. Note some warning signs:

- Misses or ignores social cues about others' personal or sexual limits or boundaries.
- Spends most of spare time with children and shows little interest in spending time with another adult.
- Links sexuality and aggression in language or behavior, for example, sexualized threats or insults, like "whore" or "slut".
- Makes fun of children's body parts, describes children with sexual words like "stud" or "sexy" or talks again and again about the sexual activities of children or teens.
- Has an interest in sexual fantasies with children or is unclear about what's appropriate with children.
- Minimizes hurtful or harmful behaviors when confronted; blames others or denies harmfulness of actions or words despite impact.
- Often has a "special" child friend, maybe a different one each year.
- Encourages silence and secrets in children.
- Masturbates so often that it gets in the way of important day-to-day activities.
- Was physically, sexually or emotionally mistreated or abused as a child and has not adequately addressed the possible effects.
- Downloads/views Internet pornography and is not willing to show if children are involved.
- Becomes so pre-occupied with the Internet sexual activity that it starts to impact family and/or work life.
- Asks adult partners to dress or act like a child or teen during sexual activity.

While single behaviors, in themselves, do not indicate that an individual is likely to engage in sexually-harmful behaviors, these behaviors, especially in combination, may strongly suggest that an adult or adolescent needs help.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR WHEN ADULTS ARE WITH CHILDREN

Have you ever seen someone playing with a child and felt uncomfortable with it? Maybe you thought, "I'm just over-reacting," or, "he/she doesn't really mean that." If you are uncomfortable, but don't see specific signs, you should trust your instincts and ask more questions.

Below is a list of behaviors that might be cause for concern.

Do you know an adult, adolescent or older child who:

- Makes others uncomfortable by ignoring social, emotional or physical boundaries or limits?
- Refuses to let a child set any of his or her own limits? Uses teasing or belittling language to keep a child from setting a limit?
- Insists on hugging, touching, kissing, tickling, wrestling with or holding a child even when the child does not want this physical contact or attention?
- Frequently makes sexual references or tells sexual or suggestive jokes with children present?
- Exposes a child to adult sexual interactions without apparent concern?
- Has secret interactions with teens or children (such as games, sharing drugs, alcohol, or sexual material) or spends excessive time emailing, text messaging or calling children or youth?
- Seems "too good to be true," for example, baby sits different children for free; takes children on special outings alone; buys children gifts or gives them money for no apparent reason?
- Allows children or teens to consistently get away with inappropriate behaviors?

Share any concerns you may have with the person in charge of the ministry, staff, volunteer coordinator, or clergy. Better to err on the side of caution than overlooking a concern.

Remember, volunteering is a privilege and not a right. Screening procedures are set in place to protect both vulnerable persons and those who are serving them in a ministerial setting.

MY COVENANT/COMMITMENT TO CHILDREN, YOUTH AND ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
 (and to the Safe and Sacred Space Abuse Prevention Program of the United Methodist Kansas East Conference)

I agree to live by the understanding that, as a person in authority, it is my responsibility to avoid sexual contact with children, youth, and developmentally disabled persons in my care. Additionally, I will find follow all conference (and my local church) guidelines regarding appropriate ways to serve children, youth and/or developmentally disabled persons in my care.

I certify that the information I have provided on the application form is true and correct. The information that I have furnished on my application, KBI, SRS permission form, and/or any other background information, is subject to verification. This includes a criminal history and abuse check, or other criminal background sources, if necessary. If it is found that the answers given are untrue, I understand that I will be asked to terminate my role as one who gives care, supervision, and leadership in this program. I agree that, in order to obtain honest personal references for my application, I waive my right to read the references and agree that they should remain confidential.

Attendee (Please Print): _____

Signature _____ Date _____

VERIFICATION OF COMPLETION OF TRAINING

This is to confirm that _____ has completed the necessary training as part of the certification process to work with children, youth and adults with developmental disabilities.

INSTRUCTOR (please print): _____

Signature _____ Date of Training Session _____