

# KENNEDY 1st UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## SAFE SANCTUARIES POLICY

### SUMMARY – Effective November 13, 2012

To make everyone's experience within Kennedy 1st United Methodist Church a safe and positive one the following guidelines are set forth. These guidelines are to be implemented in a Christian fashion, and not instituted as barriers for our volunteers to overcome in order to serve the church. They are intended to protect our young people, our volunteers, our church leaders, and the integrity, reputation and resources of our church.

Kennedy 1st UMC will do all that it can to provide a safe environment free of any and all forms of physical and emotional abuse. The church will respond appropriately to all alleged, reported, or suspected incidents of abuse, and deal compassionately with the alleged victim and his/her family; the accused and his/her family; and members of the church family.

Abuse refers to any non-accidental injury; any sexual activity or sexual exploitation; any neglectful treatment or maltreatment that harms the health, welfare, or safety, both physical and emotional, of a child, youth, or adult. For the purposes of this policy, "children and youth" are considered to be infant through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

- The policy will be reviewed annually
- Background checks will be performed for all paid staff and volunteers
- Volunteers must be active within the Kennedy 1st United Methodist Church for six months before being considered for a position as child/youth worker
- Orientation for all staff and volunteers will be performed annually
- All leaders must be at least five years older than the children/youth they are supervising
- Whenever possible two adults, preferably unrelated, will be present at all times during any church sponsored program. Classrooms will remain visible (i.e. open door or unobstructed view into classroom).
- Nursery care if available is for children birth through preschool.
- Accidents or injuries must be reported to the Pastor or a member of the Safe Sanctuaries Team. Accident reports must be completed within 24 hours following the occurrence. If a child/youth is involved, parents will be notified immediately.
- Permission slips are required for off-site events, including permission for medical, dental, surgical treatment and/or hospitalization. Permission slips are required for transportation to and from events.

- Outside groups who use the church shall have their own written abuse prevention policy in place with a copy given to the church. If a policy is not available, then the group leader will sign a waiver that the church will not be responsible for unsafe situations. The group leader will be subject to a background check.
- Any abuse suspected, observed or disclosed to a volunteer shall be reported to the appropriate authorities.
- A copy of the Safe Sanctuaries Policy is available on the church website and in the office.