

Safe Sanctuary Procedures for
District and Conference Young People's Ministry Events in the
Tennessee Conference of The United Methodist Church

Definition of Terms

Adult- An adult is a member of the Church Youth Leadership Team. This person is at least 5 years older than the oldest youth member of the church group.

Church Youth Leadership Team: The Church Youth Leadership is the group of adults responsible for the local church group attending an event.

District Youth Coordinator- is a member of the District Youth Leadership Team. The District Youth Coordinator develops and organizes fellowship and training opportunities at the district level.

Host Mission Family- The refers to the mission site(home) that the youth group is serving. It may also mean the home where the youth group is given the opportunity to shower and freshen up prior to a meal during a local retreat such as *Hands and Feet Mission Retreat*.

Ministry Leader- Can be interchangeable with youth coordinator/director or Pastor. This person is the lead contact for the group attending the ministry event.

Mission Event- A mission event is an event such as but not limited to *Hands and Feet Mission Retreat*.

Reasonable Adult/Youth Ratios- 2:16 at retreats/rallies/meetings; 2:8 at offsite camps and mission trips.

Staff/Volunteers- A staff/volunteer for an event is a person who is selected to assist with the event and is not connected to a church attending the event. This may include overnight security on camp facilities or in hotel settings.

Youth Coordinator/Director- The youth coordinator/director for the purposes of this document is considered the lead youth minister from the local church.

The purpose of these procedures is to ensure the safety and reduce the risk of harm for all persons participating in Conference and District Young People's Ministry events.

- 1. Two Adult Rule:** During all conference events one adult will not be alone with any number of youth. For small group activities where one adult supervises one group, two or more groups are to meet in sight and sound of each other. The ministry leader may also decide to combine groups to ensure the safety of all parties. Small Group sizes will be determined by the size of the group, but should not exceed reasonable adult/youth ratios.
- 2. Five Year Older Rule:** Persons supervising youth will be at least 5 years older than the oldest youth participant. It is expected that all staff/volunteers be at least 21 years of age or older and have completed a background check, interview with the Director of Young People's Ministries, and Safe Sanctuary training.
- 3. Adult/Youth Ratio:** The adult/youth ratio will be at least 2:16 at retreats/rallies/meetings with the understanding that one adult will not be alone with any number of youth(refer to Procedure 1). The ratio for offsite camps and mission trips will be 2:8. Some events may require smaller ratios. If so stricter requirements will be communicated to all adults and churches prior to the event through registration confirmation packets as well as through emails and the conference youth website.
- 4. Male/Female Adults:** When a group from any local church consists of both genders, the accompanying adults shall also be of both genders. This also applies to small groups and mission worksite groups.

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- 5. Background Checks:** All adults at conference youth events will be expected to have a background check, training on the local church's Safe Sanctuary Policy and Procedures*, as well as a review of these procedures. Each church will sign a verification form listing each adult attending the event signed by the youth coordinator/director and Pastor. The verification form will serve as a confirmation that each adult has completed the requirements for participation. (If your church does not have policy or background checks are needed contact Trish Myrick, Safe Spaces Administrative Assistant at 615-329-1177 for help.)

- 6. Medical Release/Registration Form:** All youth and adults attending Young People's Ministry Conference events shall have a completed medical release form and completed parental permission form. The medical release form will be valid for a 1 year period beginning with the first event for which it is submitted. It is expected that a new form will be submitted if a change in medical status occurs. The parental permission form will be submitted through the entry form process for each event. All forms will be kept in a secure database at the Conference office, they will be referenced as needed for each event.

- 7. Youth Leader Responsibility:** It is expected that the youth coordinator/director from the local church maintain a copy of each attendee's form at all times. These forms should be carried with the group traveling to and from events.

- 8. Check-In Procedure:** The Church Youth Leadership Team should develop a consistent check-in procedure during the event to meet with the church group. These should be spread throughout the event and event day.

- 9. Lodging for overnight events:** An adult and youth will not share a room/hotel/tent unless the adult is a parent of that youth with whom they are sharing the room/hotel/tent.

- 10. Lodging for overnight events:** There will be separate sleeping areas/rooms for males and females at all conference sponsored events. When there are several rooms/cabins of youth, there will be at least two non-related adults of the same gender in the room/cabin.

- 11. Showers:** In the event of open showers, separate shower times for youth and for adults shall be designated to prevent youth and adults showering together. If this is not possible, swimsuits will be required.

- 12. District Youth Ministry:** District Youth Coordinators and adults serving on the Conference Council on Youth Ministries (CCYM) and the District Council on Youth Ministries(DCYM) shall be at least 23 years of age.

- 13. Two Adults at Mission Sites:** There will be two adults at each work site at all times on mission project sites. (Procedure 7 applies.)

- 14. Mission Site Responsibility:** No youth will be alone with an adult from a host mission family during a mission event. This includes host pastors, congregation members, homeowners, clients of mission agencies, etc. Likewise, an adult mission team member will not be alone with a youth from the host mission.

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ADULT YOUTH WORKER SAFE SANCTUARY CONFIRMATION FORM

This statement is between the local church listed and the Tennessee Conference of The United Methodist Church:

Conference Event: _____

Church: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Contact Person: _____ Phone:(_____) _____

The following adults who are accompanying our youth to this conference event have completed the requirements for participation as an adult attendee as prescribed by the Tennessee Conference and enacted as a part of this local church's staff/volunteer screening process. This includes a background check, reference check, training on the local church's Safe Sanctuary Policy and Procedures, as well as a review of the Safe Sanctuary Procedures for District and Conference Young People's Ministry Events.

This form should be returned immediately upon receipt or with the group registration form to the Young People's Ministry office by mail or fax.

These background checks were completed through the conference office: ___ Yes ___ No
If No, please indicate background company. _____

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Signed: _____
Church Pastor **Date**

Signed: _____
Youth Coordinator/Director **Date**