

SALEM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
SAFE SCHOOLS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Salem United Methodist Church to create an environment that not only provides for the protection and safety of our children but also for the employees and volunteers who work with the children.

Goals

- *Make Salem United Methodist Church Preschool a safe place for the children.
- *Develop and implement an ongoing education plan for the staff, volunteers, and parents regarding the reality of child abuse, risk factors leading to child abuse, and strategies for the prevention of child abuse.
- * Adopt screening procedures for the hiring of employees and volunteers, including the use of reference checks, interviews, and background checks.
- * Develop and implement safety procedures for all school activities.
- * Advise parents and staff of an agency or person that they can contact for advice and of available community resources.
- * Establish procedures for the reporting of suspected child abuse.
- * Establish procedures for responding to allegations of child abuse by a staff member.

I. Hiring Policy

A. Full and Part-Time Employees

1. Full time employees, and part-time employees, will use an application form that requests comprehensive information regarding the applicant. Such information will include identification, references, address, work history, volunteer history, experiences and skills related to the position, and consent to verify all information.
2. A personal interview will be required for every applicant that is a serious candidate for the position. The candidate will meet with the pastor of the church and the Preschool Director. This will apply to all employees.
3. All current employees will be required to complete the Criminal Background Check

B. Regular Volunteers - Regular volunteers are defined as those that volunteer on a regular and/or weekly basis.

- 1 All regular volunteers will meet with the Director of the Preschool.
2. Be required to fill out a Criminal background Check.
3. Will always be supervised by a teacher.
4. Will sign in and sign out each day.

C. Occasional Volunteers – Occasional volunteers are defined as those that volunteer on an irregular basis or on as as needed basis.

1. Will be encouraged but not required to fill out the Criminal Background Check.
2. Will never be left alone with children.
3. Will always be supervised by a teacher.
4. Will sign in and out each day.

II. The Safe School Policy will be reviewed with the parents at least once per year. A copy of the Safe School Policy will be available in the Director's office.

III. Basic Procedures for Safe Schools

A. *The "Two Adult Rule"* - All preschool sponsored programs or events

involving children will be staffed by at least two members of the teaching staff..

B. *Annual Orientation for Employees and Volunteers* - All employees and volunteers will be

required to attend an orientation session once per year in which they are informed of:

1. The Safe School Policy and Procedures.
2. The procedures to be used in all programs with children.
3. Appropriate steps to report an incident of child abuse.
4. Details of the state laws regarding child abuse.

D. *The Eighteen Years Old Rule*" - No one under the age of eighteen can volunteer

without an adult present.

E. *Windows in all Doors* - Every room set aside for children and youth must have a door with a window in it.

F. *Open-Door Policy* - The door of the room used by regular volunteers with children must remain

open at all times during the volunteer session. Ideally, the volunteer sessions should be conducted when others are nearby.

G. *Keeping Parents Informed* - Parents should always be given notification and full information regarding the event(s) in which their children will be participating. This would include; who are the adults in charge, and the setting and times for the activity. Parents will be notified that a Regular Volunteer is working with the children.

H. *Adequate Insurance* - Adequate insurance should be purchased for the scope of the ministries.

IV. Establish a Safe School Team – The team would meet at every incident or accusation of abuse.

A. The team will include the Pastor, President of the Preschool Board, and Director of the Preschool.

B. One person would be designated to communicate with the media.

C. Plan for educating the parents and staff.

1. Parent meeting

2. Newsletter articles

3. Policy on display in the director's office

D. Plan training and refresher courses for all who work with children.

E. Evaluate the current practices of the school as related to supervision of children.

V. Responding to Allegations/Incidents of Abuse Against a Staff Member.

A. All allegations of child abuse will be directed to the pastor, presidents of the preschool board or director of the preschool.

B. Notify the parents of the victim and insure the child's safety.

C. Notify the accused abuser and remove him/her from any further contact with children.

D. Notify the proper law enforcement authorities, Children & Youth Services, or the Governor's Hotline.

E. Notify the proper law enforcement agency or Children & Youth Services.

F. Notify the District Superintendent, the Chancellor, the insurance agent, and the church's attorney.

G. Keep a written record of everything that has occurred involving the allegation/incident.

H. Prepare a news release.

I. Prepare a brief statement to make to the parents without giving details.

J. Cooperate fully with the investigation by police or CYS.

K. Provide pastoral care for the victim and their family.